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FROM

Bequest of
James Walker

ESSAYS

Fourth Edition

TO

THE LORD MONTEAGLE

OF BRANDON

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED:

A MEMORIAL OF THE AUTHOR'S AFFECTION

AND GRATITUDE.

LONDON, January 22, 1848.

ESSAYS

WRITTEN IN THE INTERVALS

OF BUSINESS

Sir Arthur Helps.

LONDON

WILLIAM PICKERING

1848

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Bequest of
James Walker, D. D., L. L. D.
(H. U. 1814.)
President of Harv. Univ.

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THE FIRST PART.

" AND he that knows how little certainty there is in
" humane diſcourſes, and how *we know in part, and*
" *propheſie in part*, and that of every thing thereof we
" know a little, we are ignorant in much more, muſt
" either be content with ſuch proportion as the things
" will bear, or as himſelf can get, or elſe he muſt never
" ſeek to alter or to perſwade any man to be of his
" opinion. For the greateſt part of diſcourſes that are
" in the whole world, is nothing but a heap of probable
" inducements, plauſibilities, and witty entertainments:
" and the throng of notices is not unlike the accidents
" of a battel, in which every man tells a new tale, ſome-
" thing that he ſaw, mingled with a great many things
" which he ſaw not; his eyes and his fear joyning to-
" gether equally in the inſtructions and the illuſion,
" theſe make up the ſtories."

Jeremy Taylor's Ductor Dubitantium.

ON PRACTICAL WISDOM.

PRACTICAL wiſdom acts in the mind, as gravitation does in the material world: combining, keeping things in their places, and maintaining a mutual dependence amongſt the various parts of our ſyſtem. It is for ever reminding us where we are, and what we can do, not in fancy, but in real life. It does not permit us to wait for dainty duties, pleaſant to the imagination; but inſiſts upon our doing thoſe which are before us. It is always inclined to make

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dwarfiſhneſs is often accompanied by a diſproportionate ſize of ſome part. The large hands and feet of a dwarf ſeem to have devoured his ſtature. But if you mean that imagination, of itſelf, is ſomething inconſiſtent with practical wiſdom, I think you will find that your opinion is not founded on experience. On the contrary, I believe that there have been few men who have done great things in the world who have not had a large power of imagination. For imagination, if it be ſubject to reaſon, is its "ſlave of the lamp."

It is a common error to ſuppoſe that practical wiſdom is ſomething Epicurean in its nature, which makes no difficulties, takes things as they come, is deſirous of getting rid rather than of completing, and which, in ſhort, is never troubleſome. And from a fancy of this kind, many perſons are conſidered ſpeculative merely becauſe they are of a ſearching nature; and are not ſatisfied with ſmall expedients, and

ſuch devices as ſerve to conceal the ills they cannot cure. And if to be practical is to do things in ſuch a way as to leave a great deal for other people to undo at ſome future, and no very diſtant, period—then, certainly, theſe ſcrutinizing pains-taking ſort of perſons are not practical. For it is their nature to prefer a good open viſible rent to a time-ſerving patch. I do not mean to ſay that they may not reſort to patching as a means of delay. But they will not permit themſelves to fancy that they have done a thing when they have only hit upon ſome expedient for putting off the doing.

Bacon ſays, "In this theatre of man's "life, God and angels only ſhould be "lookers-on; that contemplation and ac-"tion ought ever to be united, a conjunc-"tion like unto that of the two higheſt "planets, Saturn the planet of reſt, and "Jupiter the planet of action." It is in

this conjunction, which ſeems to Bacon ſo deſirable, that practical wiſdom delights; and on that account it is ſuppoſed by ſome men to have a tinge of baſeneſs in it. They do not know that practical wiſdom is as far from what they term expediency, as it is from impracticability itſelf. They ſee how much of compromiſe there is in all human affairs. At the ſame time, they do not perceive that this compromiſe, which ſhould be the nice limit between wilfulneſs and a deſertion of the light that is within us, is the thing of all others which requires the diligent exerciſe of that uprightneſs, which they fear to put in peril, and which, they perſuade themſelves, will be ſtrengthened by inactivity. They fancy, too, that high moral reſolves and great principles are not for daily uſe, and that there is no room for them in the affairs of this life. This is an extreme deluſion. For how is the world ever made better? not by mean little ſchemes

which ſome men fondly call practical, not by ſetting one evil thing to counteract another, but by the introduction of thoſe principles of action which are looked upon at firſt as theories, but which are at laſt acknowledged and acted upon as common truths. The men who firſt introduce theſe principles are practical men, though the practices which ſuch principles create may not come into being in the life-time of their founders.

AIDS TO CONTENTMENT.

THE firſt object of this eſſay is to ſuggeſt ſome antidotes againſt the manifold ingenuity of ſelf-tormenting.

For inſtance, how much fretting might be prevented by a thorough conviction that there can be no ſuch thing as unmixed good in this world! In ignorance of this, how many a man, after having made a free choice in any matter, contrives to find innumerable cauſes for blaming his judgment! Blue and green having been the only colours put before him, he is diſſatiſ-

fied with himſelf becauſe he omitted to chooſe pure white. Shenſtone has worked out the whole proceſs with fidelity. "We "are oftentimes in ſuſpenſe betwixt the "choice of different purſuits. We chooſe "one at laſt doubtingly, and with an un-"conquered hankering after the other. "We find the ſcheme, which we have "choſen, anſwer our expectations but in-"differently—moſt worldly projects will. "We, therefore, repent of our choice, "and immediately fancy happineſs in "the paths which we decline; and this "heightens our uneaſineſs. We might "at leaſt eſcape the aggravation of it. It "is not improbable, we had been more "unhappy, but extremely probable, we "had not been leſs ſo, had we made a "different deciſion."

A great deal of diſcomfort ariſes from overſenſitiveneſs about what people may ſay of you or your actions. This requires

to be blunted. Conſider whether anything that you can do will have much connection with what they will ſay. And beſides, it may be doubted whether they will ſay any thing at all about you. Many unhappy perſons ſeem to imagine that they are always in an amphitheatre, with the aſſembled world as ſpectators; whereas, all the while, they are playing to empty benches. They fancy, too, that they form the particular theme of every paſſer-by. If, however, they muſt liſten to imaginary converſations about themſelves, they might, at any rate, defy the proverb, and inſiſt upon hearing themſelves well ſpoken of.

Well, but ſuppoſe that it is no fancy: and that you really are the object of unmerited obloquy. What then? It has been well ſaid, that in that caſe the abuſe does not touch you; that if you are guiltleſs, it ought not to hurt your feelings any more than if it were ſaid of another

perſon, with whom you are not even acquainted. You may anſwer that this falſe deſcription of you is often believed in by thoſe whoſe good opinion is of importance to your welfare. That certainly is a palpable injury; and the beſt mode of bearing up againſt it is to endeavour to form ſome juſt eſtimate of its nature and extent. Meaſure it by the worldly harm which is done to you. Do not let your imagination conjure up all manner of apparitions of ſcorn, and contempt, and univerſal hiſſing. It is partly your own fault if the calumny is believed in by thoſe who ought to know you, and in whoſe affections you live. That ſhould be a circle within which no poiſoned dart can reach you. And for the reſt, for the injury done you in the world's eſtimation, it is ſimply a piece of ill-fortune, about which it is neither wiſe nor decorous to make much moaning.

A little thought will ſometimes prevent

you from being diſcontented at not meeting with the gratitude which you have expected. If you were only to meaſure your expectations of gratitude by the extent of benevolence which you have expended, you would ſeldom have occaſion to call people ungrateful. But many perſons are in the habit of giving ſuch a factitious value to any ſervices which they may render, that there is but little chance of their being contented with what they are likely to get in return, which, however, may be quite as much as they deſerve.

Beſides, it is a common thing for people to expect from gratitude what affection alone can give.

There are many topics which may conſole you when you are diſpleaſed at not being as much eſteemed as you think you ought to be. You may begin by obſerving that people in general will not look about for anybody's merits, or ad-

mire anything which does not come in their way. You may conſider how ſatirical would be any praiſe which ſhould not be baſed upon a juſt appreciation of your merits: you may reflect how few of your fellow-creatures can have the opportunity of forming a juſt judgment about you: you may then go further, and think how few of thoſe few are perſons whoſe judgment would influence you deeply in other matters; and you may conclude by imagining that ſuch perſons do eſtimate you fairly; though perhaps you never hear it.

The heart of man ſeeks for ſympathy, and each of us craves a recognition of his talents and his labours. But this craving is in danger of becoming morbid, unleſs it be conſtantly kept in check by calm reflection on its vanity, or by dwelling upon the very different and far higher motives which ſhould actuate us. That man has fallen into a pitiable ſtate of moral ſickneſs, in whoſe eyes the good

opinion of his fellow men is the teſt of merit, and their applauſe the principal reward for exertion.

A habit of miſtruſt is the torment of ſome people. It taints their love and their friendſhip. They take up ſmall cauſes of offence. They expect their friends to ſhow the ſame aſpect to them at all times; which is more than human nature can do. They try experiments to aſcertain whether they are ſufficiently loved: they watch narrowly the effects of abſence, and require their friends to prove to them that the intimacy is exactly upon the ſame footing as it was before. Some perſons acquire theſe ſuſpicious ways from a natural diffidence in themſelves; for which they are often loved the more: and they might find ample comfort in that, if they could but believe it. With others, theſe habits ariſe from a ſelfiſhneſs which cannot be ſatisfied. And their en-

deavours ſhould be to uproot ſuch a diſpoſition, not to ſoothe it.

Contentment abides with truth. You will generally ſuffer for wiſhing to appear other than what you are; whether it be richer, or greater, or more learned. The maſk ſoon becomes an inſtrument of torture.

Fit objects to employ the intervals of life are among the greateſt aids to contentment that a man can poſſeſs. The lives of many perſons are an alternation of the one engroſſing purſuit, and a ſort of liſtleſs apathy. They are either grinding, or doing nothing. Now to thoſe who are half their lives fiercely buſy, the remaining half is often torpid without quieſcence. A man ſhould have ſome purſuits which may be always in his power, and to which he may turn gladly in his hours of recreation.

And if the intellect requires thus to be provided with perpetual objects, what muſt it be with the affections? Depend upon it, the moſt fatal idleneſs is that of the heart. And the man who feels weary of life may be ſure that he does not love his fellow-creatures as he ought.

You cannot hope for anything like contentment ſo long as you continue to attach that ridiculous degree of importance to the events of this life which ſo many people are inclined to do. Obſerve the effect which it has upon them; they are moſt uncomfortable if their little projects do not turn out according to their fancy—nothing is to be angular to them —they regard external things as the only realities; and as they have fixed their abode here, they muſt have it arranged to their mind. In all they undertake, they feel the anxiety of a gambler, and not the calmneſs of a labouring man. It is, how-

ever, the ſucceſs or failure of their efforts, and not the motives for their endeavour, which gives them this concern. "It will "be all the ſame a hundred years hence." So ſays the Epicurean as he ſaunters by. The Chriſtian exhorts them to extend their hopes and their fears to the far future. But they are up to their lips in the preſent, though they taſte it none the more for that. And ſo they go on, fretting, and planning, and contending; until an event, about which of all their anxieties they have felt the leaſt anxious, ſweeps them and their cobwebs away from the face of the earth.

The miſery of others has always been uſed as a reaſonable aid to contentment; and it is ſo: not in an Epicurean ſenſe; for, indeed I do not believe that that ſweetneſs at beholding the diſtreſs of others, which Lucretius ſpeaks of, is ever felt when the diſtreſs is really ſeen or known by us, but only when it is fancied. The miſery,

however, of his fellows muſt ſhame a man into thinking leſs about his own annoyances; and it may ſerve to calm his mind even in the moſt poignant ſorrow. Seneca ſays "The poor inhabitant of a narrow "alley mourned his ſon with a more pa- "tient mind, having ſeen premature fu- "nerals marſhalled forth even from kings' "palaces:" and Jeremy Taylor, addreſſing the men of his own time, exclaims, "When thy little misfortune troubles thee, "remember that thou haſt known the beſt "of kings and the beſt of men put to "death publicly by his own ſubjects." In our days, though kings ſtill occupy the tragic ſtage; it is, alas, for claſſes and for races of men, that our hearts muſt bleed the moſt. And, of a truth, a man may well forget his ſmall diſcomforts, when, at any given moment, he may be ſure that there are many thouſand human beings on the Atlantic, exhauſting almoſt every con-

ceivable form of wretchedneſs; and moſt of them "wedged together in a maſs of living corruption."*

I have no intention of putting forward ſpecifics for real afflictions, or pretending to teach refined methods for avoiding grief. As long, however, as there is anything to be done in a matter, the time for grieving about it has not come. But when the ſubject for grief is fixed and inevitable, ſorrow is to be borne like pain. It is only a paroxyſm of either that can juſtify us

* Buxton's "African Slave Trade and its Remedy." On the capture of the Flor de Loando in 1838, the dead ſlaves were "drawn out" each morning by the legs, there not being room to go between them "to take up their bodies." Indeed, it was long ago given in evidence by an experienced witneſs, that ſlaves were ſtowed away "ſo that they had not ſo much room as a man in his coffin:" and the horrors of the middle paſſage are ſaid to have increaſed ſince that time.

in neglecting the duties which no bereavement can leſſen, and which no ſorrow can leave us without. And we may remember that ſorrow is at once, the lot, the trial, and the privilege, of man.

Moſt of the aids to contentment above ſuggeſted, are comparatively, ſuperficial ones; and, though they may be ſerviceable, there is much in human nature that they cannot touch. Even pagans were wont to look for more potent remedies. They could not help ſeeking for ſome great idea to reſt upon; ſomething to ſtill the throbbings of their ſouls; ſome primæval myſtery which ſhould be anſwerable for the miſeries of life. Such was their idea of Neceſſity, the ſource of ſuch ſyſtems as the Stoic and the Epicurean. Chriſtianity reſts upon very different foundations. And ſurely a Chriſtian's reliance on divine goodneſs, and his full belief in another world, ſhould conſole him under ſerious

affliction, and bear the ſeverer teſt of ſupporting him againſt that under-current of vexations which is not wanting in the ſmootheſt life.

ON SELF-DISCIPLINE.

THERE is always ſome danger of ſelf-diſcipline leading to a ſtate of ſelf-confidence: and the more ſo, when the motives for it are of a poor and worldly character, or the reſults of it outward only, and ſuperficial. But ſurely when a man has got the better of any bad habit or evil diſpoſition, his ſenſations ſhould not be thoſe of exultation only: ought they not rather to be akin to the ſhuddering faintneſs with which he would ſurvey a chaſm that he had been

guided to avoid, or with which he would recal to mind a dubious deadly ſtruggle which had terminated in his favour? The ſenſe of danger is never, perhaps, ſo fully apprehended as when the danger has been overcome.

Self-diſcipline is grounded on ſelf-knowledge. A man may be led to reſolve upon ſome general courſe of ſelf-diſcipline by a faint glimpſe of his moral degradation: let him not be contented with that ſmall inſight. His firſt ſtep in ſelf-diſcipline ſhould be to attempt to have ſomething like an adequate idea of the extent of the diſorder. The deeper he goes in this matter the better: he muſt try to probe his own nature thoroughly. Men often make uſe of what ſelf-knowledge they may poſſeſs to frame for themſelves ſkilful flattery, or to amuſe themſelves in fancying what ſuch perſons as they are would do under various imaginary circumſtances. For flatteries and for fancies of

this kind not much depth of ſelf-knowledge is required: but he who wants to underſtand his own nature for the purpoſes of ſelf-diſcipline, muſt ſtrive to learn the whole truth about himſelf, and not ſhrink from telling it to his own ſoul:—

> "To thine own ſelf be true,
> And it muſt follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canſt not then be falſe to any man."

The old courtier Polonius meant this for worldly wiſdom; but it may be conſtrued much more deeply.

Imagine the ſoul, then, thoroughly awake to its ſtate of danger, and the whole energies of the man devoted to ſelf-improvement. At this point, there often ariſes a habit of introſpection which is too limited in its nature: we ſcrutinize each action as if it were a thing by itſelf, independent and ſelf-originating; and ſo our ſcrutiny does leſs good, perhaps, than

might be expected from the pain it gives and the reſolution it requires. Any truthful examination into our actions muſt be good: but we ought not to be ſatisfied with it, until it becomes both ſearching and progreſſive. Its aim ſhould be not only to inveſtigate inſtances, but to diſcover principles. Thus,—ſuppoſe that our conſcience upbraids us for any particular bad habit: we then regard each inſtance of it with intenſe ſelf-reproach, and long for an opportunity of proving the amendment which ſeems certain to ariſe from our pangs of regret. The trial comes: and ſometimes our former remorſe is remembered, and ſaves us; and ſometimes it is forgotten, and our conduct is as bad as it was before our conſcience was awakened. Now in ſuch a caſe we ſhould begin at the beginning, and ſtrive to diſcover where it is that we are wrong in the heart. This is not to be done by weighing each particular inſtance, and obſerving

after what interval it occurred, and whether with a little more, or a little leſs, temptation than uſual: inſtead of dwelling chiefly on mere circumſtances of this kind, we ſhould try and get at the ſubſtance of the thing, ſo as to aſcertain what fundamental precept of God is violated by the habit in queſtion. That precept we ſhould make our ſtudy; and then there is more hope of a permanent amendment.

Infinite toil would not enable you to ſweep away a miſt; but, by aſcending a little, you may often look over it altogether. So it is with our moral improvement: we wreſtle fiercely with a vicious habit, which would have no hold upon us if we aſcended into a higher moral atmoſphere.

As I have heard ſuggeſted, it is by adding to our good purpoſes, and nouriſhing the affections which are rightly

placed, that we ſhall beſt be able to combat the bad ones. By adopting ſuch a courſe you will not have yielded to your enemy, but will have gone, in all humility, to form new alliances: you will then reſiſt an evil habit with the ſtrength which you have gained in carrying out a good one. You will find, too, that when you ſet your heart upon the things that are worthy of it, the ſmall ſelfiſh ends, which uſed to be ſo dear to it, will appear almoſt diſguſting: you will wonder that they could have had ſuch hold upon you.

In the ſame way, if you extend and deepen your ſympathies, the prejudices which have hitherto clung obſtinately to you will fall away: your former uncharitableneſs will ſeem abſolutely diſtaſteful: you will have brought home to it feelings and opinions with which it cannot live.

Man, a creature of twofold nature, body and ſoul, ſhould have both parts of

that nature engaged in any matter in which he is concerned: ſpirit and form muſt both enter into it. It is idol worſhip to ſubſtitute the form for the ſpirit: but it is a vain philoſophy which ſeeks to diſpenſe with the form. All this applies to ſelf-diſcipline.

See how moſt perſons love to connect ſome outward circumſtance with their good reſolutions: they reſolve on commencing the new year with a ſurrender of this bad habit: they will alter their conduct as ſoon as they are at ſuch a place. The mind thus ſhows its feebleneſs; but we muſt not conclude that the ſupport it naturally ſeeks is uſeleſs. At the ſame time that we are to turn our chief attention to the attainment of right principles, we cannot ſafely neglect any aſſiſtance which may ſtrengthen us in contending againſt bad habits: far is it from the ſpirit of true humility to look down upon ſuch aſſiſtance. Who would

not be glad to have the ring of Eaſtern ſtory, which ſhould remind the wearer by its change of colour of his want of ſhame? Still theſe auxiliaries partake of a mechanical nature: we muſt not expect more from them than they can give: they may ſerve as aids to memory; they may form landmarks, as it were of our progreſs; but they cannot, of themſelves, maintain that progreſs.

It is in a ſimilar ſpirit that we ſhould treat what may be called prudential conſiderations. We may liſten to the ſuggeſtions of prudence, and find them an aid to ſelf-diſcipline; but we ſhould never reſt upon them. While we do not fail to make the due uſe of them, we muſt never forget that they do not go to the root of the matter. Prudence may enable a man to conquer the world, but not to rule his own heart: it may change one evil paſſion for another; but it is not a thing of potency enough to make a man change his nature.

Prayer is a conſtant ſource of invigoration to ſelf-diſcipline: not the thoughtleſs praying, which is a thing of cuſtom; but that which is ſincere, intenſe, watchful. Let a man aſk himſelf whether he really would have the thing he prays for: let him think, while he is praying for a ſpirit of forgiveneſs, whether even at that moment he is diſpoſed to give up the luxury of anger. If not, what a horrible mockery it is! To think that a man can find nothing better to do, in the preſence of his Creator, than telling off ſo many words: alone with his God, and repeating his taſk like a child: longing to get rid of it, and indifferent to its meaning!

ON OUR JUDGMENTS OF OTHER MEN.

IN forming theſe lightly, we wrong ourſelves, and thoſe whom we judge. In ſcattering ſuch things abroad, we endow our unjuſt thoughts with a life which we cannot take away, and become falſe witneſſes to pervert the judgments of the world in general. Who does not feel that to deſcribe with fidelity the leaſt portion of the entangled nature that is within him would be no eaſy matter? And yet the ſame man who feels this, and who, perhaps,

would be aſhamed of talking at hazard about the properties of a flower, of a weed, of ſome figure in geometry, will put forth his gueſſes about the character of his brother-man, as if he had the fulleſt authority for all that he was ſaying.

But perhaps we are not wont to make ſuch raſh remarks ourſelves: we are only pleaſed to receive them with the moſt obliging credence from the lips of any perſon we may chance to meet with. Such credulity is any thing but blameleſs. We cannot think too ſeriouſly of the danger of taking upon truſt theſe off-hand ſayings, and of the poſitive guilt of uttering them as if they were our own, or had been aſſayed by our obſervation. How much we ſhould be aſhamed if we knew the ſlight grounds of ſome of thoſe uncharitable judgments to which we lend the influence of our name by repeating them! And even if we repeat ſuch things

only as we have good reaſon to believe in, we ſhould ſtill be in no hurry to put them forward, eſpecially if they are ſentences of condemnation. There is a maxim of this kind which Thomas à Kempis, in his chapter "de prudentiâ in agendis," has given with all the force of expreſſion that it merits. "Ad hanc etiam pertinet, "non quibuſlibet hominum verbis cre-"dere; *nec audita vel credita, mox ad* "*aliorum aures effundere.*"

There are certain things quite upon the ſurface of a man's character: there are certain obvious facts in any man's conduct: and there are perſons who, being very much before the world, offer plenty of materials for judging about them. Such circumſtances as theſe may fairly induce you to place credence in a general opinion, which, however, you have no means of verifying in any way for yourſelf: but in no caſe ſhould you ſuffer yourſelf to be carried away at once

by the current ſayings about men's characters and conduct. If you do, you are helping to form a mob. Conſider what theſe ſayings are: how ſeldom they embody the character diſcuſſed; or go far to exhauſt the queſtion, if it is one of conduct. It is well if they deſcribe a part with faithfulneſs, or give indications from which a ſhrewd and impartial thinker may deduce ſome true concluſions. Again, theſe ſayings may be true in themſelves, but the prominence given to them may lead to very falſe impreſſions. Beſides, how many of them muſt be formed upon the opinion of a few perſons, and thoſe, perhaps, forward thinkers.

You feel that you yourſelf would be liable to make miſtakes of all kinds if you had to form an independent judgment in the matter: do not too readily ſuppoſe that the general opinions you hear are free from ſuch miſtakes merely becauſe they are made, or appear to you to be made, by a great many people.

If we come to analyſe the various opinions we hear of men's character and conduct, there muſt be many which are formed wrongly, though ſincerely, either from imperfect information, or erroneous reaſoning. There will be others which are the ſimple reſult of the prejudices and paſſions of the perſons judging, of their humours, and ſometimes even of their ingenuity. There will be others grounded on total miſrepreſentations which ariſe from imperfect hearing, or from ſome entire miſtake, or from a report being made by a perſon who underſtood ſo little of the matter that it was not poſſible for him to convey, with anything like accuracy, what he heard about it. Then there are the careleſs things which are ſaid in general converſation, but which often have as much apparent weight as if they had been well conſidered. Sometimes theſe various cauſes are combined; and the

reſult is, that an opinion of ſome man's character and conduct gets abroad which is formed after a wrong method, by prejudiced perſons, upon a falſe ſtatement of facts, reſpecting a matter which they cannot poſſibly underſtand; and this is then left to be inflated by Folly, and blown about by idleneſs.

There is an excellent paſſage in Wollaſton's "Religion of Nature," upon this ſubject, where he ſays, "the good or bad "repute of men depends in a great mea- "ſure upon mean people, who carry their "ſtories from family to family, and pro- "pagate them very faſt: like little inſects, "which lay apace, and the leſs the faſter. "There are few, very few, who have the "opportunity and the will and *the ability* "*to repreſent things truly*. Beſide the "matters of fact themſelves, there are "many circumſtances which, before ſen- "tence is paſſed, ought to be known and "weighed, and yet ſcarce ever can be

" known, but to the perſon himſelf who " is concerned. He may have other " views, and another ſenſe of things, than " his judges have: and what he under- " ſtands, what he feels, what he intends, " may be a ſecret confined to his own " breaſt. Or perhaps the cenſurer, not- " withſtanding this kind of men talk as if " they were infallible, may be miſtaken " himſelf in his opinion, and judge that " to be wrong which in truth is right."

Few people have imagination enough to enter into the deluſions of others, or indeed to look at the actions of any other perſon with any prejudices but their own. Perhaps, however, it would be nearer the truth to ſay that few people are in the habit of employing their imagination in the ſervice of charity. Moſt perſons require its magic aid to gild their caſtles in the air; to conduct them along thoſe fancied triumphal proceſſions in which they themſelves play ſo conſpicuous a

part; to conquer enemies for them without battles; and to make them virtuous without effort. This is what they want their imagination for: they cannot ſpare it for any little errand of charity. And ſometimes when men do think charitably, they are afraid to ſpeak out, for fear of being conſidered ſtupid, or credulous.

We have been conſidering the danger of adopting current ſayings about men's character and conduct: but ſuppoſe we conſider, in detail, the difficulty of forming an original opinion on theſe matters; eſpecially if we have not a perſonal knowledge of the men of whom we ſpeak. In the firſt place, we ſeldom know with ſufficient exactneſs the facts upon which we judge: and a little thing may make a great difference when we come to inveſtigate motives. But the report of a tranſaction ſometimes repreſents the real facts no better than the laboured variation

does the ſimple air; which, amidſt ſo many ſhakes and flouriſhes, might not be recognized even by the perſon who compoſed it. Then again, how can we enſure that we rightly interpret thoſe actions which we exactly know? Perhaps one of the firſt motives that we look for is ſelf-intereſt, when we want to explain an action: but we have ſcarcely ever ſuch a knowledge of the nature and fortunes of another, as to be able to decide what is his intereſt, much leſs what it may appear to him to be: beſides, a man's fancies, his envy, his wilfulneſs, every day interfere with, and override his intereſts. He will know this himſelf, and will often try to conceal it by inventing motives of ſelf-intereſt to account for his doing what he has a mind to do.

It is well to be thoroughly impreſſed with a ſenſe of the difficulty of judging about others; ſtill judge we muſt, and

ſometimes very haſtily: the purpoſes of life require it. We have, however, more and better materials, ſometimes, than we are aware of: we muſt not imagine that they are always deep-ſeated and recondite: they often lie upon the ſurface. Indeed, the primary character of a man is eſpecially diſcernible in trifles; for then he acts, as it were, almoſt unconſciouſly. It is upon the method of obſerving and teſting theſe things that a juſt knowledge of individual men in great meaſure depends. You may learn more of a perſon even by a little converſe with him, than by a faithful outline of his hiſtory. The moſt important of his actions may be anything but the moſt ſignificant of the man; for they are likely to be the reſults of many things beſides his nature. To underſtand that, I doubt whether you might not learn more from a good portrait of him, than from two or three of the moſt prominent actions of his life. Indeed, if men

did not expreſs much of their nature in their manners, appearance, and general bearing, we ſhould be at a ſad loſs to make up our minds how to deal with each other.

In judging of others, it is important to diſtinguiſh thoſe parts of the character and intellect which are eaſily diſcernible from thoſe which require much obſervation. In the intellect, we ſoon perceive whether a man has wit, acuteneſs, or logical power. It is not eaſy to diſcover whether he has judgment. And it requires ſome ſtudy of the man to aſcertain whether he has practical wiſdom; which, indeed, is a reſult of high moral, as well as intellectual qualities.

In the moral nature, we ſoon detect ſelfiſhneſs, egotiſm, and exaggeration. Careleſſneſs about truth is ſoon found out; you ſee it in a thouſand little things. On the other hand it is very difficult to come to a right concluſion about a man's

temper, until you have ſeen a great deal of him. Of his taſtes, ſome will lie on the ſurface, others not; for there is a certain reſerve about moſt people in ſpeaking of the things they like beſt. Again it is always a hard matter to underſtand any man's feelings. Nations differ in their modes of expreſſing feelings, and how much more individual men!

There are certain caſes in which we are peculiarly liable to err in our judgments of others. Thus, I think, we are all diſpoſed to diſlike in a manner diſproportionate to their demerits, thoſe who offend us by pretenſion of any kind. We are apt to fancy that they deſpiſe us; whereas, all the while, perhaps, they are only courting our admiration. There are people who wear the worſt part of their characters outwards: they offend our vanity; they rouſe our fears; and under theſe influences we omit to conſider how often a ſcornful man is tender-hearted,

and an aſſuming man, one who longs to be popular and to pleaſe.

Then there are characters of ſuch a different kind from our own, that we are without the means of meaſuring and appreciating them. A man who has no humour, how difficult for him to underſtand one who has!

But of all the errors in judging of others, ſome of the worſt are made in judging of thoſe who are neareſt to us. They think that we have entirely made up our minds about them, and are apt to ſhow us that ſort of behaviour only which they know we expect. Perhaps, too, they fear us, or they are convinced that we do not and cannot ſympathize with them. And ſo we move about in a miſt, and talk of phantoms as if they were living men, and think that we underſtand thoſe who never interchange any diſcourſe with us, but the talk of the market place; or if they do, it is only as players who are

playing a part ſet down in certain words, to be eked out with ſtage geſtures for each affection, who would deem themſelves little elſe than mad if they were to ſay out to us any thing of their own.

ON THE EXERCISE OF BENEVOLENCE.

WITH the moſt engaging objects of benevolence around them, men conſume the largeſt part of their exiſtence in the acquiſition of money, or of knowledge; or in ſighing for the opportunities of advancement; or in doting over ſome unavailing ſorrow. Or, as it often happens, they are outwardly engaged in ſlaving over the forms and follies of the world, while their minds are given up to dreams of vanity; or to long-drawn reveries, a mere indulgence of their

fancy. And yet hard by them are groans, and horrors, and ſufferings of all kinds, which ſeem to penetrate no deeper than their ſenſes.

Let them think what boundleſs occupations there are before us all! Conſider the maſſes of human beings in our manufacturing towns and crowded cities left to their own devices—the deſtitute peaſantry of our ſiſter-land—the horrors of ſlavery wherever it exiſts—the general aſpect of the common people—the pervading want of education—the fallacies and falſehoods which are left, unchecked, to accompliſh all the miſchief that is in them—the many legal and executive reforms not likely to meet with much popular impulſe, and requiring, on that account, the more diligence from thoſe who have any inſight into ſuch matters. By employing himſelf upon any one of the above ſubjects, a man is likely to do ſome good. If he only aſcertains what has been done, and what

is doing, in any of theſe matters, he may be of great ſervice. A man of real information becomes a centre of opinion, and therefore of action.

Many a man will ſay:—"This is all "very true: there certainly is a great deal "of good to be done. Indeed, one is "perplexed what to chooſe as one's point "of action; and ſtill more how to begin "upon it." To which I would anſwer: —Is there no one ſervice for the great family of man which has yet intereſted you? Is no work of benevolence brought near to you by the peculiar circumſtances of your life? If there is; follow it at once. If not; ſtill you muſt not wait for ſomething appoſite to occur. Take up any ſubject relating to the welfare of mankind, the firſt that comes to hand: read about it: think about it: trace it in the world, and ſee if it will not come to your heart. How liſtleſsly the eye glances over the map of a country upon which we have

never ſet foot! On the other hand, with what ſatisfaction we contemplate the mere outline only of a land we have once travelled over! Think earneſtly upon any ſubject, inveſtigate it ſincerely, and you are ſure to love it. You will not complain again of not knowing whither to direct your attention. There have been enthuſiaſts about heraldry. Many have devoted themſelves to cheſs. Is the welfare of living, thinking, ſuffering, eternal creatures, leſs intereſting than "argent" and "azure," or than the knight's move, and the progreſs of a pawn?

There are many perſons, doubtleſs, who feel the wants and miſeries of their fellow men tenderly if not deeply; but this feeling is not of the kind to induce them to exert themſelves out of their own ſmall circle. They have little faith in their individual exertions doing aught towards a remedy for any of the great diſorders of the world. If an evil of magnitude forces

itſelf upon their attention, they take ſhelter in a comfortable ſort of belief that the courſe of events, or the gradual enlightenment of mankind, or at any rate, ſomething which is too large for them to have any concern in, will ſet it right. In ſhort, they are content to remain ſpectators: or, at beſt, to wait until an occaſion ſhall arrive when their benevolence may act at once, with as little preparation of means, as if it were ſomething magical.

But opportunities of doing good, though abundant, and obvious enough, are not exactly fitted to our hands: we muſt be alert in preparing ourſelves for them. Benevolence requires method and activity in its exerciſe. It is by no means the ſame ſort of thing as the indolent good humour with which a well-fed man, reclining on a ſunny bank, looks upon the working world around him.

As to the notion of waiting for the power to do good, it is one that we muſt never

liſten to. Surely the exerciſe of a man's benevolence is not to depend upon his worldly good fortune! Every man has to-day the power of laying ſome foundation for doing good; if not of doing it. And whoever does not exert himſelf until he has a large power of carrying out his good intentions, may be ſure that he will not make the moſt of the opportunity when it comes. It is not in the heat of action; nor when a man, from his poſition, is likely to be looked up to with ſome reverence; that he ſhould have to begin his ſearch for facts or principles. He ſhould then come forth to apply reſults; not to work them out painfully, and perhaps precipitately, before the eyes of the world.

The worldly-wiſe may aſk: "Will not "theſe benevolent purſuits prevent a man "from following with ſufficient force," what they call, "his legitimate occupa-"tions?" I do not ſee why. Surely Provi-

dence has not made our livelihood ſuch an all-abſorbing affair, that it does not leave us room or time for our benevolence to work in. However, if a man will only give up that portion of his thinking time which he ſpends upon vain glory, upon imagining, for inſtance, what other people are thinking about him, he will have time and energy enough to purſue a very laborious ſyſtem of benevolence.

I do not mean to contend that active benevolence may not hinder a man's advancement in the world: for advancement greatly depends upon a reputation for excellence in ſome one thing of which the world perceives that it has preſent need: and an obvious attention to other things, though perhaps not incompatible with the excellence itſelf, may eaſily prevent a perſon from obtaining a reputation for it. But any deprivation of this kind would be readily endured if we only took the view of our ſocial relations which Chriſti-

anity opens to us. We ſhould then ſee that benevolence is not a thing to be taken up by chance, and put by at once to make way for every employment which ſavours of ſelf-intereſt. Benevolence is the largeſt part of our buſineſs, beginning with our home duties, and extending itſelf to the utmoſt verge of humanity. A vague feeling of kindneſs towards our fellow creatures is no ſtate of mind to reſt in. It is not enough for us to be able to ſay that nothing of human intereſt is alien to us, and that we give our acquieſcence, or indeed our tranſient aſſiſtance, to any ſcheme of benevolence that may come in our way. No: in promoting the welfare of others we muſt toil; we muſt devote to it earneſt thought, conſtant care, and zealous endeavour. What is more, we muſt do all this with patience; and be ready, in the ſame cauſe, to make an habitual ſacrifice of our own taſtes and wiſhes. Nothing ſhort of this is the viſit-

ing the ſick, feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, which our creed requires of us.

Kindneſs to animals is no unworthy exerciſe of benevolence. We hold that the life of brutes periſhes with their breath, and that they are never to be clothed again with conſciouſneſs. The inevitable ſhortneſs then of their exiſtence ſhould plead for them touchingly. The inſects on the ſurface of the water, poor ephemeral things, who would needleſsly abridge their dancing pleaſure of to-day? Such feelings we ſhould have towards the whole animate creation. To thoſe animals, over which we are maſters for however ſhort a time, we have poſitive duties to perform. This ſeems too obvious to be inſiſted upon; but there are perſons who act as though they thought they could buy the right of ill-treating any of God's creatures.

We ſhould never in any way conſent to the ill treatment of animals, becauſe the fear of ridicule, or ſome other fear, prevents our interfering. As to there being anything really trifling in any act of humanity, however ſlight, it is moral blindneſs to ſuppoſe ſo. The few moments in the courſe of each day which a man abſorbed in ſome worldly purſuit may careleſsly expend in kind words or trifling charities to thoſe around him, and kindneſs to an animal is one of theſe, are perhaps, in the ſight of Heaven, the only time that he has lived to any purpoſe worthy of recording.

DOMESTIC RULE.

TACITUS ſays of Agricola, that "he governed his family, "which many find to be a "harder taſk than to govern a province." And the worſt of this difficulty is, that its exiſtence is frequently unperceived, until it comes to be preſſingly felt.

For, either a man thinks that he muſt needs underſtand thoſe whom he ſees daily, and alſo, perhaps, that it is no great matter whether he underſtand them or not, if he is reſolved to do his duty by them: or he believes that in domeſtic rule

there is much licenſe, and that each occaſion is to be dealt with by ſome law made at the time, or after: or he imagines that any domeſtic matter which he may leave to-day omitted or ill-done can be repaired at his leiſure, when the concerns of the outer world are not ſo preſſing as they are at preſent.

But each day brings its own duties, and carries them along with it; and they are as waves broken on the ſhore, many like them coming after, but none ever the ſame. And amongſt all his duties, as there are none in which a man acts more by himſelf and can do more harm with leſs outcry from the world, ſo there are none requiring more forethought and watchfulneſs than thoſe which ariſe from his domeſtic relations. Nor can there be a reaſonable hope of his fulfilling thoſe duties while he is ignorant of the feelings, however familiar he may be with the countenances, of thoſe around him.

The extent and power of domeſtic rule are very great: but this is often overlooked by the perſons who poſſeſs it; and they are rather apt to underrate the influence of their own authority. They can hardly imagine how ſtrongly it is felt by others, unleſs they ſee it expreſſed in ſomething outward. The effects of this miſtake are often increaſed by another, which comes into operation when men are dealing with their inferiors in rank and education: in which caſe they are rather apt to fancy that the natural ſenſe of propriety, which would put the right limit to familiar intercourſe, belongs only to the well-educated or the well-born. And from either of theſe cauſes, or both united, they are led, perhaps, to add to their authority by a harſhneſs not their own, rather than to impair it, as they fancy, by that degree of freedom which they muſt allow to thoſe around them, if they would

enter into their feelings and underſtand their diſpoſitions. Perhaps there are ſome perſons who think that they can manage very well without this familiar intercourſe: and certainly there is but little occaſion for knowing much about the nature of thoſe whom you only intend to reſtrain. Coercion, however, is but a ſmall part of government.

We ſhould always be moſt anxious to avoid provoking the rebel ſpirit of the will in thoſe who are entruſted to our guidance: we ſhould not attempt to tie them up to their duties, like galley-ſlaves to their labour. We ſhould be very careful that, in our anxiety to get the outward part of an action performed to our mind, we do not deſtroy that germ of ſpontaneouſneſs which could alone give any ſignificance to the action. God has allowed free will to man, for the choice of good or evil; and is it likely that it is

left to us to make our fellow creatures virtuous by word of command? We may inſiſt upon a routine of proprieties being performed with ſoldier-like preciſion; but there is no drilling of men's hearts.

It is a great thing to maintain the juſt limits of domeſtic authority, and to place it upon its right foundation. You cannot make reaſon conform to it. It may be fair to inſiſt upon a certain thing being done, but not that others ſhould agree with you in ſaying that it is the beſt thing that could have been done; for there cannot be a ſhorter way of making them hypocritical. Your ſubmitting the matter at all to their judgments may be gratuitous; but if you do ſo, you muſt remember that the Courts of Reaſon recognize no difference of perſons. Your wiſhes may fairly outweigh their arguments: but this of courſe is foreign to the reaſonableneſs or unreaſonableneſs of the thing itſelf, conſidered independently.

Domeſtic Rule is founded upon truth and love. If it has not both of theſe, it is nothing better than a deſpotiſm.

It requires the perpetual exerciſe of love in its moſt extended form. You have to learn the diſpoſitions of thoſe under you, and to teach them to underſtand yours. In order to do this, you muſt ſympathize with them, and convince them of your doing ſo; for upon your ſympathy will often depend their truthfulneſs. Thus, you muſt perſuade a child to place confidence in you, if you wiſh to form an open upright character. You cannot terrify it into habits of truth. On the contrary, are not its earlieſt falſehoods cauſed by fear, much oftener than from a wiſh to obtain any of its little ends by deceit? How often the complaint is heard from thoſe in domeſtic authority, that they are not confided in! But they forget how hard it is for an inferior to confide in

a ſuperior, and that he will ſcarcely venture to do ſo without the hope of ſome ſympathy on the part of the latter; and the more ſo, as half our confidences are about our follies, or what we deem ſuch.

Every one who has paid the ſlighteſt attention to this ſubject knows that domeſtic rule is built upon juſtice, and therefore upon truth; but it may not have been obſerved what evils will ariſe from even a ſlight deviation into conventionality. For inſtance, there is a common expreſſion about "overlooking trifles." But what many perſons ſhould ſay, when they uſe this expreſſion is,—That they affect not to obſerve ſomething, when there is no reaſon why they ſhould not openly recognize it. Thus they contrive to make matter of offence out of things which really have no harm in them. Or the expreſſion means that they do not care to take notice of ſomething which they really believe to be wrong; and as it is

not of much preſent annoyance to them, they perſuade themſelves that it is not of much harm to thoſe who practiſe it. In either caſe, it is their duty to look boldly at the matter. The greater quantity of truth and diſtinctneſs you can throw into your proceedings, the better. Connivance creates uncertainty, and gives an example of ſlineſs; and very often you will find that you connive at ſome practice, merely becauſe you have not made up your mind whether it is right or wrong, and you wiſh to ſpare yourſelf the trouble of thinking. All this is falſehood.

Whatever you allow in the way of pleaſure or of liberty, to thoſe under your control, you ſhould do it heartily: you ſhould recognize it entirely, encourage it, and enter into it. If, on the contrary, you do not care for their pleaſures, or ſympathize with their happineſs, how can you expect to obtain their confidence? And when you tell them that you conſult

their welfare, they look upon it as ſome abſtract idea of your own. They will doubt whether you can know what is beſt for them, if they have good reaſon for thinking that you are likely to leave their particular views of happineſs entirely out of the account.

In what has been already ſaid, there has been much that evidently relates to the management of ſervants. But it may be well to allude more diſtinctly to our duties towards them; eſpecially conſidering that in this country alone, they are ſaid to amount to about a million perſons. In how many inſtances, though living under the ſame roof with us, they ſhare none of our feelings, nor we of theirs; their preſence is felt as a reſtraint, we know nothing about them but that they perform certain ſet duties; and, in ſhort, they may be ſaid to be a kind of live furniture. There is ſomething very repugnant to Chriſtianity in all this. Surely

there might be much more ſympathy between maſters and ſervants, without our ſocial ſyſtem, at leaſt the good part of it, being deſtroyed, or even, in the ſlighteſt degree, endangered. And, at any rate, we may be certain that a faſtidious reſerve towards our fellow-creatures is not the way in which true dignity or ſtrength of mind will ever manifeſt themſelves in us.

We come next to conſider ſome of the various means which may be made uſe of in Domeſtic Rule.

Of courſe it is obvious that his own example muſt be the chief means in any man's power, by which he can illuſtrate and enforce thoſe duties which he ſeeks to impreſs upon his houſehold.

Next to this, praiſe and blame are among the ſtrongeſt means which he poſſeſſes; and they ſhould not depend upon his humour. He ſhould not throw a bit of praiſe at his dependents by way of

making up for a previous diſplay of anger, not warranted by the occaſion.

Ridicule is in general to be avoided; not that it is inefficient, perhaps, for the preſent purpoſe; but becauſe it tends to make a poor and world-fearing character. It is too ſtrong a remedy: and can ſeldom be applied with ſuch juſt preciſion as to neutralize the evil aimed at, without deſtroying, at the ſame time, ſomething that is good.

Still leſs ſhould it ever appear that ridicule is directed againſt that which is good in itſelf, or which may be the beginning of goodneſs. There is perhaps more gentleneſs required in dealing with the infant virtues, than even with the vices, of thoſe under our guidance. We ſhould be very kind to any attempt at amendment. An idle ſneer, or a look of incredulity, has been the death of many a good reſolve. We ſhould alſo be very cautious in reminding thoſe who now

would fain be wiſer, of their raſh ſayings of evil, of their early and uncharitable judgments of others; otherwiſe we run a great riſk of hardening them in evil. This is eſpecially to be guarded againſt with the young; for never having felt the mutability of all human things, nor having lived long enough to diſcover that his former certainties are among the ſtrangeſt things which a man looks back upon in the viſta of the paſt: not perceiving that time is told by that pendulum, man, which goes backwards and forwards in its progreſs; nor dreaming that the way to ſome opinions may lie through their oppoſites; they are mightily aſhamed of inconſiſtency, and may be made to look upon reparation as a crime.

The following are ſome general maxims which may be of ſervice to any one in domeſtic authority.

The firſt is to make as few crimes as

he can: and not to lay down thoſe rules of practice, which, from a careful obſervation of their conſequences, he has aſcertained to be ſalutary, as if they were ſo many innate truths which all perſons alike muſt at once, and fully, comprehend.

Let him not attempt to regulate other people's pleaſures by his own taſtes.

In commanding, it will not always be ſuperfluous for him to reflect whether the thing commanded is poſſible.

In puniſhing, he ſhould not conſult his anger; nor in remitting puniſhment, his eaſe.

Let him conſider whether any part of what he is inclined to call diſobedience, may have reſulted from an inſufficient expreſſion of his own wiſhes.

He ſhould be inclined to truſt largely.

ADVICE.

ADVICE is ſure of a hearing when it coincides with our previous concluſions, and therefore comes in the ſhape of praiſe or of encouragement. It is not unwelcome when we derive it for ourſelves, by applying the moral of ſome other perſon's life to our own, though the points of reſemblance which bring it home may be far from flattering, and the advice itſelf far from palatable. We can even endure its being addreſſed to us by another, when it is interwoven with regret at ſome error, not of ours, but of his; and when we ſee

that he throws in a little advice to us, by way of introducing, with more grace, a full recital of his own misfortunes.

But in general it is with advice as with taxation; we can endure very little of either, if they come to us in the direct way. They muſt not thruſt themſelves upon us. We do not underſtand their knocking at our doors; beſides, they always chooſe ſuch inconvenient times, and are for ever talking of arrears.

There is a wide difference between the advice which is offered you, and that which you have to ſeek for; the general careleſſneſs of the one, and the caution of the other, are to be taken into account. In ſifting the latter, you muſt take care to ſeparate the decorous part of it. I mean all that which the adviſer puts in, becauſe he thinks the world would expect it from a perſon of his character and ſtation—all that which was to ſound well to

a third party, of whom, perhaps, the adviſer ſtands ſomewhat in awe. You cannot expect him to neglect his own ſafety. The oracles will Phillipize, as long as Philip is the maſter; but ſtill they have an inner meaning for Athenian ears.

It is a diſingenuous thing to aſk for *advice*, when you mean *aſſiſtance*; and it will be a juſt puniſhment if you get that which you pretended to want. There is a ſtill greater inſincerity in affecting to care about another's advice, when you lay the circumſtances before him, only for the chance of his ſanctioning a courſe which you had previouſly reſolved on. This practice is noticed by Rochefoucault, who has alſo laid bare the falſeneſs of thoſe givers of advice who have hardly heard to the end of your ſtory, before they have begun to think how they can adviſe upon it to their own intereſt, or their own renown.

It is a maxim of prudence that when you adviſe a man to do ſomething which is for your own intereſt as well as for his, you ſhould put your own motive for adviſing him, full in view, with all the weight that belongs to it. If you conceal the intereſt which you have in the matter, and he ſhould afterwards diſcover it, he will be reſolutely deaf even to that part of the argument which fairly does concern himſelf. If the lame man had endeavoured to perſuade his blind friend that it was pure charity which induced him to lend the uſe of his eyes, it is not improbable that he never would have been carried home, though it was the other's intereſt to carry him.

To get extended views, you ſhould conſult with perſons who differ from you in diſpoſition, circumſtances, and modes of thought. At the ſame time, the moſt practicable advice may often be obtained

from thoſe who are of a ſimilar nature to yourſelf, or who underſtand you ſo thoroughly that they are ſure to make their advice perſonal. This advice will contain ſympathy; for as it has been ſaid, a man always ſympathizes to a certain extent with what he underſtands. It will not, perhaps, be the ſoundeſt advice that can be given in the abſtract, but it may that which you can beſt profit by; for you may be able to act up to it with ſome conſiſtency. This applies more particularly when the advice is wanted for ſome matter which is not of a temporary nature, and where a courſe of action will have to be adopted. It is obſerved in "*The Stateſman*" with much truth, "Nothing can be for a man's in-"tereſt in the long run which is not "founded on his character."

For ſimilar reaſons, when you have to give advice, you ſhould never forget whom you are addreſſing, and what is practicable for him. You ſhould not look

about for the wiſeſt thing which can be ſaid, but for that which your friend has the heart to undertake, and the ability to accompliſh. You muſt ſometimes feel with him, before you can poſſibly think for him. There is more need of keeping this in mind, the greater you know the difference to be between your friend's nature and your own. Your advice ſhould not degenerate into compariſons between what would have been your conduct, and what was your friend's. You ſhould be able to take the matter up at the point at which it is brought to you. It is very well to go back, and to ſhow him what might, or what ought to have been done, if it throws any light upon what is to be done; or if you have any other good purpoſe in ſuch converſation. But remember that comment, however judicious, is not advice; and that advice ſhould always tend to ſomething practicable.

The advice which we have juſt been

ſpeaking of, is of that kind which relates to points of conduct. If you want to change a man's principles, you may have to take him out of himſelf, as it were; to ſhow him fully the intenſe difference between your own views and his, and to trace up that difference to its ſource. Your object is not to make him do the beſt with what he has, but to induce him to throw ſomething away altogether.

There are occaſions on which a man feels that he has ſo fully made up his mind that hardly anything could move him; and at the ſame time, he knows that he ſhall meet with much blame from thoſe whoſe good opinion is of value to him, if he acts according to that mind. Let him not think to break his fall by aſking their advice beforehand. As it is, they will be ſevere upon him for not having conſulted them; but they will be outrageous, if after having conſulted them,

he then acts in direct oppoſition to their counſel. Beſides, they will not be ſo inclined to parade the fact of their not having been conſulted, as they would, of their having given judicious advice which was unhappily neglected. I am not ſpeaking of thoſe inſtances in which a man is bound to conſult others, but of ſuch as conſtantly occur, where his conſulting them is a thing which may be expected, but is not due.

In ſeeking for a friend to adviſe you, look for uprightneſs in him, rather than for ingenuity. It frequently happens that all you want is moral ſtrength. You can diſcern conſequences well enough, but cannot make up your mind to bear them. Let your Mentor alſo be a perſon of nice conſcience, for ſuch a one is leſs likely to fall into that error to which we are all ſo liable, of adviſing our friends to act with leſs forbearance, and with leſs generoſity,

than we ſhould be inclined to ſhow ourſelves, if the caſe were our own. "If I "were you" is a phraſe often on our lips; but we take good care not to diſturb our identity, nor to quit the diſengaged poſition of a byſtander. We recommend the courſe we might purſue if we were acting for you in your abſence, but ſuch as you never ought to undertake in your own behalf.

Beſides being careful for your own ſake about the perſons whom you go to for advice, you ſhould be careful alſo for theirs. It is an act of ſelfiſhneſs unneceſſarily to conſult thoſe who are likely to feel a peculiar difficulty or delicacy in being your adviſers, and who, perhaps, had better not be informed at all about the matter.

SECRECY.

FOR once that ſecrecy is formally impoſed upon you, it is implied a hundred times by the concurrent circumſtances. All that your friend ſays to you, as to his friend, is entruſted to you only. Much of what a man tells you in the hour of affliction, in ſudden anger, or in any outpouring of his heart, ſhould be ſacred. In his craving for ſympathy, he has ſpoken to you as to his own ſoul.

To repeat what you have heard in ſo-

cial intercourſe is ſometimes a ſad treachery; and when it is not treacherous, it is often fooliſh. For you commonly relate but a part of what has happened, and even if you are able to relate that part with fairneſs, it is ſtill as likely to be miſconſtrued as a word of many meanings, in a foreign tongue, without the context.

There are few converſations which do not imply ſome degree of mutual confidence, however ſlight. And in addition to that which is ſaid in confidence, there is generally ſomething which is peculiar, though not confidential; which is addreſſed to the preſent company alone, though not confided to their ſecrecy. It is meant for them, or for perſons like them, and they are expected to underſtand it rightly. So that when a man has no ſcruple in repeating all that he hears to anybody that he meets, he pays but a poor compliment to himſelf; for he ſeems to take it for granted that what was ſaid in his preſence,

would have been ſaid, in the ſame words, at any time, aloud, and in the market place. In ſhort, that he is the average man of mankind: which I doubt much whether any man would like to conſider himſelf.

On the other hand, there is an habitual and unmeaning reſerve in ſome men, which makes ſecrets without any occaſion; and it is the leaſt to ſay of ſuch things that they are needleſs. Sometimes it proceeds from an innate ſhyneſs or timidity of diſpoſition; ſometimes from a temper naturally ſuſpicious; or it may be the reſult of having been frequently betrayed or oppreſſed. From whatever cauſe it comes, it is a failing. As cunning is ſome men's ſtrength, ſo this ſort of reſerve is ſome men's prudence. The man who does not know when, or how much, or to whom to confide, will do well in maintaining a Pythagorean ſilence. It is his beſt courſe. I would not have him change

it on any account; I only wiſh him not to miſtake it for wiſdom.

That happy union of frankneſs and reſerve which is to be deſired, comes not by ſtudying rules, either for candour or for caution. It reſults chiefly from an uprightneſs of purpoſe enlightened by a profound and delicate care for the feelings of others. This will go very far in teaching us what to confide, and what to conceal, in our own affairs; what to repeat, and what to ſuppreſs in thoſe of other people. The ſtone in which nothing is ſeen, and the poliſhed metal which reflects all things, are both alike hard and inſenſible.

When a matter is made public, to proclaim that it had ever been confided to your ſecrecy may be no trifling breach of confidence: and it is the only one which is then left for you to commit.

With reſpect to the kind of people to be truſted, it may be obſerved that grave proud men are very ſafe confidants: and that thoſe perſons, who have ever had to conduct any buſineſs in which ſecrecy was eſſential, are likely to acquire a habit of reſerve for all occaſions.

On the other hand, it is a queſtion whether a ſecret will eſcape ſooner by means of a vain man, or a ſimpleton. There are ſome people who play with a ſecret, until at laſt it is ſuggeſted by their manner to ſome ſhrewd perſon who knows a little of the circumſtances connected with it. There are others whom it is unſafe to truſt: not that they are vain, and ſo wear the ſecret as an ornament; not that they are fooliſh, and ſo let it drop by accident; not that they are treacherous, and ſell it for their own advantage. But they are ſimple-minded people, with whom the world has gone ſmoothly, who would not themſelves make any miſchief

of the ſecret which they diſcloſe, and therefore do not ſee what harm can come of telling it.

Before you make any confidence, you ſhould conſider whether the thing you wiſh to confide is of weight enough to be a ſecret. Your ſmall ſecrets require the greateſt care. Moſt perſons ſuppoſe that they have kept them ſufficiently when they have been ſilent about them for a certain time; and this is hardly to be wondered at, if there is nothing in their nature to remind a perſon that they were told to him as ſecrets.

There is ſometimes a good reaſon for uſing concealment even with your deareſt friends. It is that you may be leſs liable to be reminded of your anxieties when you have reſolved to put them aſide. Few perſons have tact enough to perceive when to be ſilent, and when to offer you counſel or condolence.

You ſhould be careful not to entruſt another unneceſſarily with a ſecret which it may be a hard matter for him to keep, and which may expoſe him to ſomebody's diſpleaſure, when it is hereafter diſcovered that he was the object of your confidence. Your deſire for aid, or for ſympathy, is not to be indulged by dragging other people into your misfortunes.

There is as much reſponſibility in imparting your own ſecrets, as in keeping thoſe of your neighbour.

THE SECOND PART.

" THE wiſdom touching negotiation or buſineſs
" hath not been hitherto collected into writing, to
" the great derogation of learning, and the profeſſors
" of learning. For from this root ſpringeth chiefly
" that note or opinion, which by us is expreſſed in
" adage to this effect, ' that there is no great con-
" currence between learning and wiſdom.' For of
" the three wiſdoms which we have ſet down to
" pertain to civil life, for wiſdom of behaviour, it is
" by learned men for the moſt part deſpiſed, as an
" inferior to virtue, and an enemy to meditation;
" for wiſdom of government, they acquit themſelves
" well when they are called to it, but that happen-
" eth to few; but for the wiſdom of buſineſs,
" wherein man's life is moſt converſant, there be no
" books of it, except ſome few ſcattered advertiſe-
" ments, that have no proportion to the magnitude
" of this ſubject. For if books were written of this,
" as the other, I doubt not but learned men with
" mean experience would far excel men of long ex-
" perience without learning, and outſhoot them in
" their own bow."

Bacon's Advancement of Learning.

ON THE EDUCATION OF A MAN OF BUSINESS.

THE eſſential qualities for a man of buſineſs are of a moral nature: theſe are to be cultivated firſt. He muſt learn betimes to love truth. That ſame love of truth will be found a potent charm to bear him ſafely through the world's entanglements—I mean ſafely in the moſt worldly ſenſe. Beſides, the love of truth not only makes a man act with more ſimplicity, and therefore with leſs chance of error; but it conduces to the higheſt intellectual deve-

lopement. The following paſſage in "*The* "*Stateſman*" gives the reaſon. "The "correſpondencies of wiſdom and good- "neſs are manifold; and that they will "accompany each other is to be inferred, "not only becauſe men's wiſdom makes "them good, but alſo becauſe their good- "neſs makes them wiſe. Queſtions of "right and wrong are a perpetual exerciſe "of the faculties of thoſe who are ſolici- "tous as to the right and wrong of what "they do and ſee; and a deep intereſt of "the heart in theſe queſtions carries with "it a deeper cultivation of the under- "ſtanding than can be eaſily effected by "any other excitement to intellectual ac- "tivity."

What has juſt been ſaid of the love of truth applies alſo to other moral qualities. Thus, charity enlightens the underſtanding quite as much as it purifies the heart. And indeed knowledge is not more girt about with power than goodneſs is with wiſdom.

The next thing in the training of one who is to become a man of buſineſs will be for him to form principles; for without theſe, when thrown on the ſea of action, he will be without rudder and compaſs. They are the beſt reſults of ſtudy. Whether it is hiſtory, or political economy, or ethics, that he is ſtudying, theſe principles are to be the reward of his labour. A principle reſembles a law in the phyſical world; though it can ſeldom have the ſame certainty, as the facts, which it has to explain and embrace, do not admit of being weighed or numbered with the ſame exactneſs as material things. The principles which our ſtudent adopts at firſt may be unſound, may be inſufficient, but he muſt not neglect to form ſome; and muſt only nouriſh a love of truth that will not allow him to hold to any, the moment that he finds them to be erroneous.

Much depends upon the temperament of a man of buſineſs. It ſhould be hopeful, that it may bear him up againſt the faintheartedneſs, the folly, the falſehood, and the numberleſs diſcouragements which even a proſperous man will have to endure. It ſhould alſo be calm; for elſe he may be driven wild by any great preſſure of buſineſs, and loſe his time, and his head, in ruſhing from one unfiniſhed thing, to begin ſomething elſe. Now this wiſhed for conjunction of the calm and the hopeful is very rare. It is, however, in every man's power to ſtudy well his own temperament, and to provide againſt the defects in it.

A habit of thinking for himſelf is one which may be acquired by the ſolitary ſtudent. But the habit of deciding for himſelf, ſo indiſpenſable to a man of buſineſs, is not to be gained by ſtudy. Deciſion is a thing that cannot be fully

exerciſed until it is actually wanted. You cannot play at deciding. You muſt have realities to deal with.

It is true that the formation of principles, which has been ſpoken of before, requires deciſion; but it is of that kind which depends upon deliberate judgment: whereas the deciſion which is wanted in the world's buſineſs muſt ever be within call, and does not judge ſo much as it foreſees and chooſes. This kind of deciſion is to be found in thoſe who have been thrown early on their own reſources, or who have been brought up in great freedom.

It would be difficult to lay down any courſe of ſtudy, not technical, that would be peculiarly fitted to form a man of buſineſs. He ſhould be brought up in the habit of reaſoning cloſely: and to enſure this, there is hardly anything better for him than the ſtudy of geometry.

In any courſe of ſtudy to be laid down for him, ſomething like univerſality ſhould be aimed at, which not only makes the mind agile, but gives variety of information. Such a ſyſtem will make him acquainted with many modes of thought, with various claſſes of facts, and will enable him to underſtand men better.

There will be a time in his youth which may, perhaps, be well-ſpent in thoſe ſtudies which are of a metaphyſical nature. In the inveſtigation of ſome of the great queſtions of philoſophy, a breadth and a tone may be given to a man's mode of thinking, which will afterwards be of ſignal uſe to him in the buſineſs of every-day life.

We cannot enter here into a deſcription of the technical ſtudies for a man in buſineſs; but I may point out that there are works which ſoften the tranſition from the ſchools to the world, and which are particularly needed in a ſyſtem of education,

like our own, conſiſting of ſtudies for the moſt part remote from real life. Theſe works are ſuch as tend to give the ſtudent that intereſt in the common things about him, which he has ſcarcely ever been called upon to feel. They ſhow how imagination and philoſophy can be woven into practical wiſdom. Such are the writings of Bacon. His lucid order, his graſp of the ſubject, the comprehenſiveneſs of his views, his knowledge of mankind, the greateſt perhaps that has ever been diſtinctly given out by an uninſpired man, the practical nature of his purpoſes, and his reſpect for anything of human intereſt, render Bacon's works unrivalled in their fitneſs to form the beſt men for the conduct of the higheſt affairs.

It is not, however, ſo much the thing ſtudied, as the manner of ſtudying it. Our ſtudent is not intended to become a learned man, but a man of buſineſs; not "a full man," but a "ready man." He

muſt be taught to arrange and expreſs what he knows. For this purpoſe let him employ himſelf in making digeſts, arranging and claſſifying materials, writing narratives, and in deciding upon conflicting evidence. All theſe exerciſes require method. He muſt expect that his early attempts will be clumſy; he begins, perhaps, by dividing his ſubject in any way that occurs to him, with no other view than that of treating ſeparate portions of it ſeparately; he does not perceive, at firſt, what things are of one kind, and what of another, and what ſhould be the logical order of their following. But from ſuch rude beginnings, method is developed; and there is hardly any degree of toil for which he would not be compenſated by ſuch a reſult. He will have a ſure reward in the clearneſs of his own views, and in the facility of explaining them to others. People bring their attention to the man who gives them moſt

profit for it; and this will be one who is a maſter of method.

Our ſtudent ſhould begin ſoon to cultivate a fluency in writing—I do not mean a flow of words, but a habit of expreſſing his thoughts with accuracy, with brevity, and with readineſs; which can only be acquired by practice early in life. You find perſons who, from neglect in this part of their education, can expreſs themſelves briefly and accurately, but only after much care and labour. Again, you meet with others who cannot expreſs themſelves accurately, although they have method in their thoughts, and can write with readineſs; but they have not been accuſtomed to look to the preciſe meaning of words: and ſuch people are apt to fall into the common error of indulging in a great many words, as if it were from a ſort of hope that ſome of them might be to the purpoſe.

In the ſtyle of a man of buſineſs nothing is to be aimed at but plainneſs and preciſion. For inſtance, a cloſe repetition of the ſame word for the ſame thing need not be avoided. The averſion to ſuch repetitions may be carried too far in all kinds of writing. In literature, however, you are ſeldom brought to account for miſleading people; but in buſineſs you may ſoon be called upon to pay the penalty for having ſhunned the word which would exactly have expreſſed your meaning.

I cannot conclude this eſſay better than by endeavouring to deſcribe what ſort of perſon a conſummate man of buſineſs ſhould be.

He ſhould be able to fix his attention on details, and be ready to give every kind of argument a hearing. This will not encumber him, for he muſt have been practiſed beforehand in the exerciſe of his intellect, and be ſtrong in principles. One

man collects materials together, and there they remain, a ſhapeleſs heap; another, poſſeſſed of method, can arrange what he has collected; but ſuch a man as I would deſcribe, by the aid of principles, goes farther, and builds with his materials.

He ſhould be courageous. The courage, however, required in civil affairs, is that which belongs rather to the commander than the common ſoldier. But any kind of courage is ſerviceable.

Beſides a ſtout heart, he ſhould have a patient temperament, and a vigorous but diſciplined imagination; and then he will plan boldly, and with large extent of view, execute calmly, and not be ſtretching out his hand for things not yet within his graſp. He will let opportunities grow before his eyes until they are ripe to be ſeized. He will think ſteadily over poſſible failure, in order to provide a remedy or a retreat. There will be the ſtrength of repoſe about him.

He muſt have a deep ſenſe of reſponſibility. He muſt believe in the power and vitality of truth, and in all he does or ſays, ſhould be anxious to expreſs as much truth as poſſible.

His feeling of reſponſibility and love of truth will almoſt inevitably endow him with diligence, accuracy, and diſcreetneſs, —thoſe common-place requiſites for a good man of buſineſs, without which all the reſt may never come to be "tranſlated "into action."

ON THE TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS.

THIS ſubject may be divided into two parts. 1. Dealing with others about buſineſs. 2. Dealing with the buſineſs itſelf.

1. *Dealing with others about Buſineſs.*

THE firſt part of the general ſubject embraces the choice and management of agents, the tranſaction of buſineſs by means of interviews, the choice of colleagues and the uſe of councils. Each of theſe topics will be treated ſeparately.

There remain, however, certain general rules with reſpect to our dealings with others which may naturally find a place here.

In your converſe with the world avoid anything like a juggling dexterity. The proper uſe of dexterity is to prevent your being circumvented by the cunning of others. It ſhould not be aggreſſive.

Conceſſions and compromiſes form a large and a very important part of our dealings with others. Conceſſions muſt generally be looked upon as diſtinct defeats; and you muſt expect no gratitude for them. I am far from ſaying that it may not be wiſe to make conceſſions, but this will be done more wiſely when you underſtand the nature of them.

In making compromiſes, do not think to gain much by concealing your views and wiſhes. You are as likely to ſuffer from its not being known how to pleaſe

or ſatisfy you, as from any attempt to overreach you, grounded on a knowledge of your wiſhes.

Delay is in ſome inſtances to be adopted adviſedly. It ſometimes brings a perſon to reaſon when nothing elſe could; when his mind is ſo occupied with one idea, that he completely over-eſtimates its relative importance. He can hardly be brought to look at the ſubject calmly by any force of reaſoning. For this diſeaſe time is the only doctor.

A good man of buſineſs is very watchful, both over himſelf and others, to prevent things from being carried againſt his ſenſe of right in moments of laſſitude. After a matter has been much diſcuſſed, whether to the purpoſe or not, there comes a time when all parties are anxious that it ſhould be ſettled; and there is then ſome danger of the handieſt way of get-

ting rid of the matter being taken for the beſt.

It is often worth while to beſtow much pains in gaining over fooliſh people to your way of thinking: and you ſhould do it ſoon. Your reaſons will always have ſome weight with the wife. But if at firſt you omit to put your arguments before the fooliſh, they will form their prejudices; and a fool is often very conſiſtent, and very fond of repetition. He will be repeating his folly in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, until at laſt it has a hearing; and it is hard if it does not ſometimes chime in with external circumſtances.

A man of buſineſs ſhould take care to conſult occaſionally with perſons of a nature quite different from his own. To very few are given all the qualities requiſite to form a good man of buſineſs. Thus a man may have the ſternneſs and the

fixedneſs of purpoſe ſo neceſſary in the conduct of affairs, yet theſe qualities prevent him, perhaps, from entering into the characters of thoſe about him. He is likely to want tact. He will be unprepared for the extent of verſatility and vacillation in other men. But theſe defects and overſights might be remedied by conſulting with perſons whom he knows to be poſſeſſed of the qualities ſupplementary to his own. Men of much depth of mind can bear a great deal of counſel; for it does not eaſily deface their own character, nor render their purpoſes indiſtinct.

2. *Dealing with the Buſineſs itſelf.*

THE firſt thing to be conſidered in this diviſion of the ſubject is the collection and arrangement of your materials. Do not fail to begin with the earlieſt hiſtory of the matter under conſideration. Be careful not to give way to any particular theory,

while you are merely collecting materials, leſt it ſhould influence you in the choice of them. You muſt work for yourſelf; for what you reject may be as important for you to have ſeen and thought about, as what you adopt: beſides, it gives you a command of the ſubject, and a comparative fearleſſneſs of ſurpriſe, which you will never have, if you rely on other people for your materials. In ſome caſes, however, you may ſave time by not labouring much, beforehand, at parts of the ſubject which are nearly ſure to be worked out in diſcuſſion.

When you have collected and arranged your information, there comes the taſk of deciding upon it. To make this leſs difficult, you muſt uſe method, and practiſe economy in thinking. You muſt not weary yourſelf by conſidering the ſame thing in the ſame way; juſt oſcillating over it, as it were; ſeldom making much

progreſs, and not marking the little that you have made. You muſt not loſe your attention in reveries about the ſubject; but muſt bring yourſelf to the point by ſuch queſtions as theſe, What has been done? What is the ſtate of the caſe at preſent? What can be done next? What ought to be done? Expreſs in writing the anſwers to your queſtions. Uſe the pen —there is no magic in it, but it prevents the mind from ſtaggering about. It forces you to methodize your thoughts. It enables you to ſurvey the matter with a leſs tired eye. Whereas in thinking vaguely, you not only loſe time, but you acquire a familiarity with the huſk of the ſubject, which is abſolutely injurious. Your apprehenſion becomes dull; you eſtabliſh aſſociations of ideas which occur again and again to diſtract your attention; and you become more tired, than if you had really been employed in maſtering the ſubject.

When you have arrived at your deci-

ſion, you have to conſider how you ſhall convey it. In doing this, be ſure that you very rarely if ever, ſay any thing which is not immediately relevant to the ſubject. Beware of indulging in maxims, in abſtract propoſitions, or in anything of that kind. Let your ſubject fill the whole of what you ſay. Human affairs are ſo wide, ſubtle, and complicated, that the moſt ſagacious man had better content himſelf with pronouncing upon thoſe points alone upon which his deciſion is called for.

It will often be a nice queſtion whether or not to ſtate the motives for your deciſions. Much will depend upon the nature of the ſubject, upon the party whom you have to addreſs, and upon your power of ſpeaking out the whole truth. When you can give all your motives, it will in moſt caſes be juſt to others and eventually good for yourſelf, to do ſo. If you can only ſtate ſome of them, then you muſt conſider whether they are likely to miſlead, or

whether they tend to the full truth. For your own ſake there is this to be conſidered in giving only a part of your reaſons: that thoſe which you give are generally taken to be the whole, or at any rate, the beſt that you have. And, hereafter, you may find yourſelf precluded from uſing an argument which turns out to be a very ſound one, which had great weight with you, but which you were at the time unwilling, or did not think it neceſſary, to put forward.

When you have to communicate the motives for an unfavourable deciſion, you will naturally ſtudy how to convey them ſo as to give leaſt pain, and to enſure leaſt diſcuſſion. Theſe are not unworthy objects; but they are immediate ones, and therefore likely to have their full weight with you. Beware that your anxiety to attain them does not carry you into an implied falſehood; for, to ſay the leaſt of it, evil is latent in that. Each day's con-

verſe with the world ought to confirm us in the maxim that a bold but not unkind ſincerity ſhould be the groundwork of all our dealings.

It will often be neceſſary to make a general ſtatement reſpecting the hiſtory of ſome buſineſs. It ſhould be lucid, yet not overburdened with details. It muſt have method not merely running through it, but viſible upon it—it muſt have method in its form. You muſt build it up, beginning at the beginning, giving each part its due weight, and not hurrying over thoſe ſteps which happen to be peculiarly familiar to yourſelf. You muſt thoroughly enter into the ignorance of others, and ſo avoid foreſtalling your concluſions. The beſt teachers are thoſe who can ſeem to forget what they know full well; who work out reſults, which have become axioms in their minds, with all the intereſt

of a beginner, and with footſteps no longer than his.

It is a good practice to draw up, and put on record, an abſtract of the reaſons upon which you have come to a deciſion on any complicated ſubject; ſo that if it is referred to, there is but little labour in making yourſelf maſter of it again. Of courſe this practice will be more or leſs neceſſary, according as your deciſion has been conveyed with a reſerved or with a full ſtatement of the reaſons upon which it was grounded.

Of all the correſpondence you receive, a conciſe record ſhould be kept; which ſhould alſo contain a note of what was done upon any letter, and of where it was ſent to, or put away. Documents relating to the ſame ſubject ſhould be carefully brought together. You ſhould endeavour to eſtabliſh ſuch a ſyſtem of arranging

your papers, as may enſure their being readily referred to, and yet not require too much time and attention to be carried into daily practice. Fac-ſimiles ſhould be kept of all the letters which you ſend out.

Theſe ſeem little things: and ſo they are, unleſs you neglect them.

ON THE CHOICE AND MANAGEMENT OF AGENTS.

THE choice of agents is a difficult matter, but any labour that you may beſtow upon it, is likely to be well repaid: for you have to chooſe perſons for whoſe faults you are to be puniſhed; to whom you are to be the whipping boy.

In the choice of an agent, it is not ſufficient to aſcertain what a man knows, or to make a catalogue of his qualities; but you have to find out how he will perform

a particular ſervice. You may be right in concluding that ſuch an office requires certain qualities, and you may diſcern that ſuch a man poſſeſſes moſt of them; and in the abſence of any means of making a cloſer trial, you may have done the beſt that you could do. But ſome deficiency, or ſome untoward combination of theſe qualities, may unfit him for the office. Hence the value of any opportunity, however ſlight, of obſerving his conduct in matters ſimilar to thoſe for which you want him.

Our previous knowledge of men will ſometimes miſlead us entirely even when we apply it to circumſtances but little different, as we think, from thoſe in which we have actually obſerved their behaviour. For inſtance, you might naturally imagine that a man who ſhows an irritable temper in his converſation is likely to ſhow a ſimilar temper throughout the conduct of his buſineſs. But experience does not

confirm this; for you will often find that men who are intemperate in ſpeech are cautious in writing.

The beſt agents are, in general, to be found amongſt thoſe perſons who have a ſtrong ſenſe of reſponſibility. Under this feeling a man will be likely to grudge no pains; he will pay attention to minute things; and what is of much importance, he will prefer being conſidered ever ſo ſtupid, rather than pretend to underſtand his orders before he does ſo.

You ſhould behave to your ſubordinate agents in ſuch a manner, that they ſhould not be afraid to be frank with you. They ſhould be able to comment freely upon your directions, and may thus become your beſt counſellors. For thoſe who are entruſted with the execution of any work, are likely to ſee things which have been overlooked by the perſon who deſigned it, however ſagacious he may be.

You muſt not interfere unneceſſarily with your agents, as it gives them the habit of leaning too much upon you. Sir Walter Scott ſays of Canning, "I fear he "works himſelf too hard, under the great "error of trying to do too much with his "own hand, and to ſee every thing with "his own eyes. Whereas the greateſt "general and the firſt ſtateſman muſt, in "many caſes, be content to uſe the eyes "and fingers of others, and hold them-"ſelves contented with the exerciſe of the "greateſt care in the choice of imple-"ments." Moſt men of vigorous minds and nice perceptions will be apt to interfere too much. But it ſhould always be one of the chief objects of a perſon in authority to train up thoſe around him to do without him. He ſhould try to give them ſome ſelf-reliance. It ſhould be his aim to create a ſtandard as to the way in which things are to be done—not to do them all himſelf. That ſtandard is likely

to be maintained for ſome time, in caſe of his abſence, illneſs, or death; and it will be applied daily to many things that muſt be done without a careful inſpection on his part, even when he is in full vigour.

With reſpect to thoſe agents whom you employ to repreſent you, your inclination ſhould be to treat them with hearty confidence. In juſtice to them as well as for your own ſake, the limits which you lay down for their guidance, ſhould be preciſe. Within thoſe limits you ſhould allow them a large diſcretionary power. You muſt be careful not to blame your agent for departing from your orders, when in fact the diſcrepancy which you notice is nothing more than the uſual difference in the ways in which different men ſet about the ſame object, even when they employ ſimilar means for its accompliſhment. For a difference of this kind

you ſhould have been prepared. But if you are in haſte to blame your repreſentative, your captiouſneſs may throw a great burden upon him unneceſſarily. It is not the ſucceſs of the undertaking only that he will thenceforward be intent upon: he will be anxious that each ſtep ſhould be done exactly after your fancy. And this may embarraſs him, render him indeciſive, and lead to his failing altogether.

The ſureſt way to make agents do their work is to ſhow them that their efforts are appreciated with nicety. For this purpoſe, you ſhould not only be very careful in your promotions and rewards; but in your daily dealings with them, you ſhould beware of making ſlight or hap-hazard criticiſms on any of their proceedings. Your praiſe ſhould not only be right in the ſubſtance, but put upon the right foundation: it ſhould point to their moſt ſtrenuous and moſt judicious exertion. I

do not mean that it ſhould always be given at the time of thoſe exertions being made, but it ſhould ſhow that they had not paſſed by unnoticed.

ON THE TREATMENT OF SUITORS.

THE maxim, "Pars beneficii "eſt, quod petitur ſi bene "neges," is miſinterpreted by many people. They conſtrue "bene" *kindly*, which is right: but they are inclined to fancy that this kindneſs conſiſts in courteſy, rather than in explicitneſs and truth.

You ſhould be very loth to encourage expectations in a ſuitor, which you have not then the power of fulfilling, or of putting in a courſe of fulfilment;—for

Hope, an architect above rules, can build, in reverſe, a pyramid upon a point. From a very little origin there often ariſes a wildneſs of expectation which quite aſtounds you. Like the Fiſherman in the Arabian Nights, when you ſee "a genie "twice as high as the greateſt of giants," you may well wonder how he could have come out of ſo ſmall a veſſel; but in your caſe, there will be no chance of perſuading the monſter to enſconce himſelf again, for the purpoſe of convincing you that ſuch a feat is not impoſſible.

In addition alſo to the natural deluſions of hope, there is ſometimes the artifice of pretending to take your words for more than they are well known to mean.

There is a deafneſs peculiar to ſuitors; they ſhould therefore be anſwered as much as poſſible in writing. The anſwers ſhould be expreſſed in ſimple terms; and all phraſes ſhould be avoided which are

not likely to convey a clear idea to the man who hears them for the firſt time. There are many perſons who really do not underſtand forms of writing which may have become common to you. When they find that courteous expreſſions mean nothing, they think that a wilful deception has been practiſed upon them. And in general, you ſhould conſider that people will naturally put the largeſt conſtruction upon every ambiguous expreſſion, and every term of courteſy which can be made to expreſs any thing at all in their favour.

It will often be neceſſary to ſee applicants; and in this caſe you muſt bear in mind that you have not only the deluſions of hope and the miſinterpretation of language to contend againſt, but alſo the imperfection of men's memories. If poſſible, therefore, do not let the interview be the termination of the matter: let it lead to ſomething in writing, ſo that you may have an opportunity of recording what you wiſhed

to expreſs. Avoid a promiſing manner: as people will be apt to find words for it. Do not reſort to evaſive anſwers for the purpoſe only of bringing the interview to a cloſe; nor ſhrink from giving a diſtinct denial, merely becauſe the perſon to whom you ought to give it is before you, and you would have to witneſs any pain which it might occaſion. Let not that balance of juſtice which Corruption could not alter one hair's breadth, be altogether diſturbed by Senſibility.

To determine in what caſes the refuſal of a ſuit ſhould be accompanied by reaſons, is a matter of conſiderable difficulty. It muſt depend very much on what portion of the truth you are able to bring forward. This was mentioned before as a general principle, in the tranſaction of buſineſs, and it may be well to abide by it in anſwering applications. You will naturally endeavour to give ſomewhat of a detailed explanation when you are deſirous of ſhow-

ing reſpect to the perſon whom you are addreſſing; but if the explanation is not a ſound or a complete one, it would be better to ſee whether the reſpect could not be ſhown in ſome other way.

In many caſes, and eſpecially when the ſuit is a mere project of effrontery, it will perhaps be prudent to refuſe, without entering at all upon the grounds of your refuſal. In an explanation addreſſed to the applicant, you will be apt to omit the ſpecial reaſons for your refuſal, as they are likely to be ſuch as would mortify his ſelf-love; and ſo you lay yourſelf open to an accuſation of unfairneſs, when he finds, perhaps, that you have ſelected ſome other perſon, who came as fully within the ſcope of your general objections, as he did himſelf. Therefore, where you are not required, and do not like, to give ſpecial reaſons, it may often be the beſt courſe ſimply to refuſe, or to couch your refuſal in impregnable generalities.

Remember that in giving any reaſon at all for refuſing, you lay ſome foundation for a future requeſt.

Thoſe who have conſtantly to deal with ſuitors are in danger of giving way too much to diſguſt at the intruſion, importunity, and egotiſm, which they meet with. As an antidote to this, they ſhould remember that the ſuit which is a matter of buſineſs to them, and which, perhaps, from its hopeleſſneſs, they look upon with little intereſt, ſeems to the ſuitor himſelf a thing of abſorbing importance. And they ſhould expect a man in diſtreſs to be as unreaſonable as a ſick perſon, and as much occupied by his own diſorder.

INTERVIEWS.

THERE is much that cannot be done without interviews. It would often require great labour, not only on your part, but alſo on the part of others whom you cannot command, to effect by means of writing what may eaſily be accompliſhed in a ſingle interview. The pen may be a ſurer, but the tongue is a nicer inſtrument. In talking, moſt men ſooner or later ſhow what is uppermoſt in their minds; and this gives a peculiar intereſt to verbal communications. Beſides, there are looks, and tones, and geſtures, which form a ſignifi-

cant language of their own. In ſhort, interviews may be made very uſeful; and are, in general, ſomewhat hazardous things: but many people look upon them rather as the paſtime of buſineſs, than as a part of it requiring great diſcretion.

Interviews are perhaps of moſt value when they bring together ſeveral conflicting intereſts, or opinions, each of which has thus an opportunity of aſcertaining the amount and variety of oppoſition which it muſt expect, and ſo is worn into moderation. It would take a great deal of writing to effect this.

Interviews are to be reſorted to when you wiſh to prevent the other party from pledging himſelf upon a matter which requires much explanation; where you ſee what will probably be his anſwer to your firſt propoſition, and know that you have a good rejoinder, which you would wiſh him to hear before he commits himſelf by

writing upon the ſubject. In caſes of this kind, however there is the ſimilar danger of a man's talking himſelf into obſtinacy before he has heard all that you have to ſay.

Interviews are very ſerviceable in thoſe matters where you would at once be able to come to a deciſion, if you did but know the real inclination of the other parties concerned: and, in general, you ſhould take care occaſionally to ſee thoſe with whom you are dealing, if the thing in queſtion is likely to be much influenced by their individual peculiarities, and you require a knowledge of the men. Now this is the caſe with the greateſt part of human affairs.

You frequently want verbal communication in order to encourage the timid, to ſettle the undecided, and to bring on ſome definite ſtage in the proceedings.

The above are inſtances in which interviews are to be ſought for on their own account; but they are ſometimes neceſ-

ſary, merely becauſe people will not be ſatisfied without them. There are perſons who can hardly believe that their arguments have been attended to, until they have had verbal evidence of the fact. They think that they could eaſily anſwer all your objections, and that they ſhould certainly ſucceed in perſuading you, if they had an opportunity of diſcuſſing the matter orally: and it may be of importance to remove this deluſion by an interview.

On the other hand interviews are to be avoided, when you have reaſons which determine your mind, but which you cannot give to the other party. If you do accede to an interview, you are almoſt certain to be tempted into giving ſome reaſons, and theſe not being the ſtrong ones, will very likely admit of a fair anſwer; and ſo, after much ſhuffling, you will be obliged to reſort to an appearance of mere wilfulneſs at laſt.

You ſhould alſo be averſe to tranſacting buſineſs verbally, with very eager, ſanguine perſons, unleſs you feel that you have ſufficient force and readineſs for it. There are people who do not underſtand any diſſent or oppoſition on your part, unleſs it is made very manifeſt. They are fully prepoſſeſſed by their own views, and they go on talking as if you agreed with them. Perhaps you feel a delicacy in interrupting them, and undeceiving them at once. The time for doing ſo paſſes by; and ever afterwards they quote you as an authority for all their folly. Or it ends by your going away pledged to a courſe of conduct which is anything but what you approve.

But perhaps there are no interviews leſs to be ſought after than thoſe in which you have to appear in connexion with one or two other parties who have exactly the ſame intereſt in the matter as your own, and muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak your ſenti-

ments, but with whom you have had little or no previous communication; or whoſe judgment you find that you cannot rely upon. In ſuch a caſe you are continually in danger of being compromiſed by the indiſcretion of any one of your aſſociates. For you do not like to diſown one of your own ſide before the adverſe party; or you are afraid of taking all the odium of oppoſition on yourſelf. You may perhaps be quite certain that your indiſcreet ally would be as anxious as yourſelf to recall his words if he could perceive their conſequences: but theſe are things which you cannot explain to him in that company.

The men who profit leaſt by interviews are often thoſe who are moſt inclined to reſort to them. They are irreſolute perſons, who wiſh to avoid pledging themſelves to anything, and ſo they chooſe an interview as the ſafeſt courſe which occurs to them. Beſides it looks like progreſs: and

makes them, as they ſay, ſee their way. Such perſons, however, are very ſoon entangled in their own words, or they are oppreſſed by the earneſt opinions of the people they meet. For to conduct an interview in the manner which they intend, would require them to have at command that courage and deciſion, which they never attain, without a long and miſerly weighing of conſequences.

Indolent perſons are very apt to reſort to interviews; for it ſaves them the trouble of thinking ſteadily, and of expreſſing themſelves with preciſion, which they are called upon to do, if they come to write about the ſubject. Now they certainly may learn a great deal in a ſhort time, and with very little trouble, by means of an interview: but if they have to take up the poſition of an antagoniſt, of a judge, or indeed any but that of a learner, then it is very unſafe, to indulge in an interview, without having prepared themſelves for it.

To conduct an interview ſucceſsfully, requires not only information and force of character, but alſo a certain intellectual readineſs. People are ſo apt to think that there are but two ways in which a thing can terminate. They are ignorant of the number of combinations which even a few circumſtances will admit of. And perhaps a propoſal is made which they are totally unprepared for, and which they cannot deal with, from being unable to apprehend with ſufficient quickneſs its main drift and conſequences.

There are caſes where the perſons meeting are upon no terms of equality reſpecting the interview; where one of them has a great deal to maintain, and the other nothing to loſe. Such an inſtance occurs in the caſe of a miniſter receiving a deputation. He has the intereſts of the public to maintain, and the intentions of the government to keep concealed. He has

to ſhow that he fully underſtands the arguments laid before him; and all the while to conceal his own bias, and to keep himſelf perfectly free from any pledge. Any member of the deputation may utter anything that he pleaſes without much harm coming of it; but every word that the miniſter ſays is liable to be interpreted againſt him to the uttermoſt. There are ſimilar occaſions in private life, where a man has to act upon the defenſive, and where the interview may be conſidered not as a battle, but as a ſiege. A man ſhould then confine himſelf to few words. He ſhould bring forward his ſtrongeſt arguments only, and not ſtate too many of them at a time; for he ſhould keep a good force in reſerve. Beſides it will be much more difficult for the other party to myſtify and pervert a few arguments than a ſet ſpeech. And he will leave them no room for gaining a ſemblance of victory by anſwering the unimportant parts of his ſtatement.

Again, whatever readineſs and knowledge of the ſubject he may poſſeſs, he ſhould have ſomebody by him on his ſide. For he is oppoſed to numbers, and muſt expect that amongſt them there will always be ſome one ready to meet his arguments, if not with argument, at any rate with proper fallacies; or at leaſt that there will be ſome one ſtupid enough to commence replying without an anſwer. He ſhould therefore have a perſon who ſhould be able to aid him in replying; and there will be a ſatisfaction in having ſomebody in the room who is not in a hoſtile poſition towards him. Beſides he will want a witneſs: for he muſt not imagine that the number of his opponents is any ſafeguard againſt miſrepreſentation, but rather a cauſe, in moſt people, of leſs attention, and leſs feeling of reſponſibility. And laſtly, the moſt preciſe man in the world, if he ſpeaks much on any matter, may be glad to hear what was the impreſſion

upon another perſon's mind: in ſhort, to ſee whether he conveyed exactly what he meant to convey.

The beſt precaution, however, which any man can take under theſe circumſtances, is to ſtate in writing, at the concluſion of the interview, the ſubſtance of what he apprehends to have been ſaid, and of what he intends to do. This would require great readineſs and the moſt earneſt attention; but in the end, it would ſave very much trouble and miſapprehenſion. A ſimilar practice might be adopted in moſt interviews of buſineſs where the ſubject would warrant ſuch a formality. It would not only be good in itſelf, but its influence would be felt throughout the interview; and people would come prepared, and would ſpeak with preciſion, when there was an immediate proſpect of their ſtatements being recorded.

OF COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS,

AND, IN GENERAL, OF BODIES OF MEN CALLED TOGETHER TO COUNSEL, OR TO DIRECT.

SUCH bodies are the fly-wheels and ſafety-valves of the machinery of buſineſs. They are ſometimes looked upon as ſuperfluities, but by their means the motion is equaliſed, and a great force is applied with little danger.

They are apt contrivances for obtaining an average of opinions, for enſuring freedom from corruption, and the reputation of that freedom. On ordinary occaſions

they are more courageous than moſt individuals. They can bear odium better. The world ſeldom looks to perſonal character as the predominating cauſe of any of their doings, though this is one of the firſt things which occur to it when the public acts of any individual are in queſtion. The very indiſtinctneſs which belongs to their corporate exiſtence adds a certain weight to their deciſions.

Councils are ſerviceable as affording ſome means of judging how things are likely to be generally received. It is ſeldom that any one perſon, however capable he may be of framing, or of executing a good meaſure, can come to a ſatisfactory concluſion as to the various appearances which that meaſure will preſent, or can be made to preſent, to others. In ſome inſtances he may be ſo little under the influence of the common prejudices around him, as not to underſtand their force, and therefore not to perceive how a new thing

will be received. Now if he has the opportunity of conſulting ſeveral perſons together, he will not only have the advantage of their common ſenſe and joint information, but he will alſo have a chance of hearing what will be the common nonſenſe of ordinary men upon the ſubject, and of providing as far as poſſible againſt it.

On the other hand, theſe bodies are much tempted by the diviſion of reſponſibility to ſloth; and therefore to dealing with things ſuperficially, and inaccurately. Another evil is the want of that continuity of purpoſe in their proceedings which is to be found in thoſe of an individual.

As it tends directly to diminiſh many of the advantages before mentioned, it is, in general, a wrong thing for a member of a Council or Commiſſion to let the outer world know that his private opinion is adverſe to any of the deciſions of his colleagues; or indeed to indicate the part, whatever it may have been, that he has

taken in the tranſactions of the general body.

The proper number of perſons to conſtitute ſuch bodies muſt vary according to the purpoſe for which they are called together. Such a number as would afford any temptation for oratorical diſplay ſhould in general be avoided. Another limit, which it may be prudent to adopt, is to have only ſo many members as to make it poſſible in moſt caſes for each to take a part in the proceedings. By having a greater number, you will not enſure more ſcrutiny into the buſineſs. It will ſtill be done by a few; but with a feeling of leſs reſponſibility than if they were left to themſelves, and with the interruptions and inconvenience ariſing from the number of perſons preſent. Beſides, the greater the number, the more likelihood there is of parties being formed in the Council.

Whether the members are many or few, there ſhould be formalities, ſtrictly main-

tained. This is eſſential in the conduct of buſineſs. Otherwiſe there will be ſuch a ſtate of things as that deſcribed by Pepys in his account of a meeting of the privy council; which, like moſt of his deſcriptions, one feels to be true to the life. "We to a Committee of the Council to "diſcourſe concerning preſſing of men; "but Lord! how they meet; never ſit "down: one comes, now another goes, "then comes another; one complaining "that nothing is done, another ſwearing "that he hath been there theſe two hours "and nobody come. At laſt my Lord "Anneſley ſays, 'I think we muſt be "forced to get the King to come to every "Committee; for I do not ſee that we "do any thing at any time but when he "is there.'"

The great art of making uſe of Councils, Commiſſions, and ſuch like bodies, is to know what kind of matter to put before them, and in what ſtate to preſent it.

"There be three parts of buſineſs, the "preparation; the debate, or examination; "and the perfection; whereof, if you look "for diſpatch, let the middle only be the "work of many, and the firſt and laſt "the work of few."*

There is likely to be a great waſte of time and labour when a thing is brought in all its firſt vagueneſs to be debated or examined by a number of perſons. And there will be much in the "preparation" and "perfection" of a matter which will only become confuſed by being ſubmitted to a full aſſembly. You might as well think of making love by a council or a board. It ſhould therefore be the buſineſs of ſome one, either in the council, or ſubordinate to it, to bring the matter forward in a diſtinct and definite ſhape. Otherwiſe there will be a wilderneſs of things ſaid before you arrive at any legitimate point of diſcuſſion. And hence Bacon adds,

* Bacon's Eſſay on Diſpatch.

" the proceeding upon ſomewhat con-
" ceived in writing doth for the moſt part
" facilitate diſpatch: for though it ſhould
" be wholly rejected, yet that negative is
" more pregnant of direction than an in-
" definite, as aſhes are more generative
" than duſt."

In order to bring the reſponſibility of any act of the general body home to the individuals compoſing it, no method ſeems ſo good as that of requiring the ſignatures of a large proportion of the Council or Commiſſion to the directions given in the matter. Even the moſt careleſs people have a ſort of averſion to ſigning things which they have never conſidered. This plan is better than requiring the ſignatures of the whole body. For it is leſs likely to degenerate into a mere formality: and beſides, the other courſe would give any one crotchetty man too great a power of hinderance.

The reſponſibility, alſo, of thoſe perſons who ſettle the details of a matter, whether ſecretaries, or committees of the Council, ſhould be clearly atteſted either by their ſignatures, or by a memorandum, ſhowing what part of the buſineſs had been entruſted to them.

As to the kind of men to be eſpecially choſen or rejected, it would be trifling to lay down any minute rules. You often require a diverſity of natures, in order that the various modes of acting congenial to different minds and tempers ſhould have an opportunity of being canvaſſed.

When a man's faults are thoſe which come to the ſurface in ſocial life, they muſt be noted as certain hinderances to his uſefulneſs as a member of any of theſe bodies. A man may be proud or ſelfiſh, and yet a good councillor; he may be ſecretly ill-tempered, and yet a reaſonable man in his converſe with the world, capable of bearing oppoſition, and an excellent

coadjutor: but if he is vain or fond of diſputes, or dictatorial, you know that his efficiency in a Council muſt to a certain extent be counteracted.

Thoſe men are the grace and ſtrength of Councils who are of that healthful nature which is content to take defeat with good humour, and of that practical turn of mind which makes them ſet heartily to work upon plans and propoſitions which have been originated in oppoſition to their judgment; who are not anxious to ſhift reſponſibility upon others; and who do not allude to their former objections with triumph, when thoſe objections come to be borne out by the reſult. In acting with ſuch perſons you are at your eaſe. You counſel ſincerely and boldly, and not with a timorous regard to your own part in the matter.

The men who have method, and, as it were, a judicial intellect, are moſt valuable councillors. Without ſome ſuch in a

Council, a great deal of cleverneſs goes for nothing: as there is nobody to ſee what has been ſtated and anſwered, to what their deliberations tend, and what progreſs has been made. Such perſons can gather the ſenſe of a mixed aſſembly, and ſuggeſt ſome line of action which may honeſtly meet the different views of the various members. They will bring back the ſubject matter when it has all but floated away, while the others have been looking for ſea-weed, or throwing ſtones at one another on the ſhore.

PARTY-SPIRIT.

PARTY-SPIRIT gives a pretext for the exerciſe of ſuch ſcorn and malice, as could not be tolerated, if they did not claim to have their origin in fervent wiſhes for the public welfare. It conſumes in idle conteſts that energy which the ſtate has need of. By the perpetual interchange of hard names it tends to make a people ſuſpicious and uncharitable; or it inclines them to think lightly of the kind of offences which they hear ſo often charged againſt their moſt eminent public men; or it "gives them a "habit of uſing epithets and affecting ſen-

" ſations of moral indignation which bear " no proportion to the thing itſelf, or to " their own real feelings about the thing; " of taking the names of Truth and Vir- " tue in vain."

Under the influence of party-ſpirit, a nation ſometimes acts towards its dependencies, and in its foreign relations, not with the whole force of the country, but with a portion of it only, bearing ſome reference to the exceſs of ſtrength in the ruling party.

Party-ſpirit makes people abjure independent thinking. It can leave nothing alone. It muſt uplift a hand in every man's quarrel, as a knight-errant of old, but with ſmall ſenſe of chivalry. It forces its odious friendſhip or its unprovoked hoſtility where neither is fitting. Even the wiſeſt require to be conſtantly on their guard againſt it; or its inſidious prejudices, like dirt and inſects on the glaſſes of a teleſcope, will blur the view, and make them ſee ſtrange monſters where there are none.

Party-ſpirit incites people to attack with raſhneſs, and to defend without ſincerity. Violent partizans are apt to treat a political opponent in ſuch a manner, when they argue with him, as to make the queſtion quite perſonal, as if he had been preſent, as it were, and a chief agent in all the crimes which they attribute to his party. Nor does the accuſed heſitate to take the matter upon himſelf, and in fancied ſelf-defence, to juſtify things which otherwiſe he would not heſitate, for one moment, to condemn.

Theſe evils muſt not be allowed to take ſhelter under the unfounded ſuppoſition that party dealings are different from any thing elſe in the world, and that they are to be governed by much looſer laws than thoſe which regulate any other human affairs. It is a very dangerous thing to acknowledge two ſorts of truth, two kinds of charity.

Is there no harm in never looking further than the worſt motive that can poſſibly be imagined for the actions of our political adverſaries? Are we to conſider the oppoſite party as ſo many Samaritans; and is there nothing that we have ever heard or read, which ſhould induce us to abate our Jewiſh antipathy to theſe brethren of ours, who do not worſhip at our temple? This is an illuſtration from which political bigots cannot eſcape. Even their own pretenſions of being always in the right will only bring the inſtance more home to them. The Jews were right about the matter in diſpute between them and the Samaritans. "Salvation is with the "Jews." But this is never held out to us as any juſtification of their behaviour.

To hear ſome men talk, one would ſuppoſe that political diſtinctions were natural diſtinctions; and that they depended upon a man's perſonal qualities. Theſe

people ſeem to think that all the good are ranged in a row on one ſide; and all the bad on the other. Now the utmoſt that can reaſonably be alleged is, that there exiſts in moſt men a prediſpoſition to one or other of the two great parties which are to be found in every free country: but this cannot be depended upon as the cauſe which determines men in general to attach themſelves to a party.

As it is, ſome range themſelves on one ſide, and ſome on the other, juſt as they uſed to do in their ſchool games, and with about as much reflection. A large number of perſons in all ranks, hold hereditary opinions. There are thouſands who make their convictions on all political ſubjects ſubſervient to their feelings as members of a claſs, and to what they believe to be the intereſts of that claſs. Then there are thoſe who think whatever the little mob in which they live pleaſes to think: and this is the moſt comfortable way of think-

ing. Direct ſelf-intereſt decides ſome men. The mereſt accidents determine others. For inſtance, how much of a man's opinions through life will depend upon any ſtrong-minded or earneſt perſon that he may have lived with at a time when he was uninformed himſelf and malleable. Remember too, that it requires but a ſlight bias to ſend a man into a party; for let him agree with it only in a few points, and he will be ſet down as belonging to it. Then, perhaps, he is called upon to act in ſome way or other politically, and a very little determines a man whoſe thoughts upon the ſubject altogether have been few and vague. Thus a political character is impreſſed upon him without his having had much to do in the matter; but, afterwards, many things will probably occur to deepen that impreſſion, and to make him a decided partiſan.

A true analyſis of the compoſition of parties would afford a good leſſon of poli-

tical tolerance. We ſhould learn from it what a mixed thing a party is; that there is no ſingle law that will explain its coheſion; and ſtill leſs is there any good ground for inſiſting that the diſtinctions of party have their origin in moral worth or turpitude.

It is of importance that we ſhould train ourſelves to make the fitting allowance for the political prejudices of others.

Paſcal aſks, "Whence comes it to paſs "that we have ſo much patience with "thoſe who are maimed in body, and ſo "little with thoſe who are defective in "mind?" And he ſays, "It is becauſe "the cripple acknowledges that we have "the uſe of our legs; whereas the fool "obſtinately maintains that we are the "perſons who halt in underſtanding. "Without this difference in the caſe, nei-"ther object would move our reſentment, "but both our compaſſion." We might try to overlook this difference, and find it

an aid to charity to conſider that men's prejudices are the ſame kind of things as their perſonal defects. Whether a man is labouring under ſome degree of phyſical deafneſs; or under ſome ſtrong prejudice, which being ever by his ſide, is always ſure of the firſt hearing, and produces a ſort of numbneſs to anything elſe: it comes nearly to the ſame thing as regards the weight which he is likely to attach to any of our arguments, when adverſe to his prejudice. In both caſes the cauſe is decided without our being fully heard.

But at the ſame time that we have recourſe to ſuch views as the above, to moderate our impatience of other people's prejudices, we ſhould keep a vigilant watch on our own. We often forget that we are partiſans ourſelves, and that we are contending with partiſans. We firſt give ourſelves credit for a judicial impartiality in all that concerns public affairs; and then

call upon our opponents actually to be as impartial as we aſſert ourſelves to be. But few of us, I ſuſpect, have any right to take this high ground. Our paſſions maſter us: and we know them to be our enemies. Our prejudices impriſon us: and like madmen, we take our jailors for a guard of honour.

I do not mean to ſuggeſt that truth and right are always to be found in middle courſes; or that there is anything particularly philoſophic in concluding that "both parties are in the wrong," and "that there is a great deal to be ſaid on "both ſides of the queſtion,"—phraſes which may belong to indolence as well as to charity and candour. Let a man have a hearty ſtrong opinion, and ſtrive by all fair means to bring it into action—if it is, in truth, an opinion, and not a thing inhaled like ſome infectious diſorder.

Many perſons perſuade themſelves that the life and well-being of a ſtate are ſomething like their own fleeting health and brief proſperity. And hence they ſee portentous things in every ſubject of political diſpute. Such fancies add much to the intolerance of party-ſpirit. But the ſtate will bear much killing. It has outlived many generations of political prophets—and it may ſurvive the preſent ones.

Diviſions in a ſtate are a neceſſary conſequence of freedom; and the practical queſtion is not to diſpenſe with party, but to make the moſt good of it. The conteſt muſt exiſt: but it may have ſomething of generoſity in it. And how is this to be? Not by the better kind of men abſtaining from any attention to politics, or ſhunning party connexions altogether. Staying away from a danger which in many inſtances it is their duty to face,

would be but a poor way of keeping themſelves ſafe. It would be a doubtful policy to encourage political indifference as a cure for the evils of party-ſpirit, even if it were a certain cure; but we cannot take this for granted, eſpecially when we obſerve that the vices of party are not always to be ſeen moſt in thoſe who have the moſt earneſt political feelings. Indeed, the attachment to a party may be, and often is, an affection of the moſt generous kind: and it muſt, I think, be allowed that even with men who do not diſcern the true end of party, nor its limits, party ſpirit is often a rude kind of patriotiſm.

The queſtion, then, is how to regulate party-ſpirit. Like all other affections, its tendency is to overſpread the whole character. One who has nothing in his ſoul to reſiſt it, or much that aſſimilates with its worſt influences, is carried away by it to evil. But a good man will ſhow the

earneſtneſs of his attachment to his party by his endeavour to elevate its character; and in the utmoſt heat of party conteſts, he will try to maintain a love of truth, and a regard for the charities of life.

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